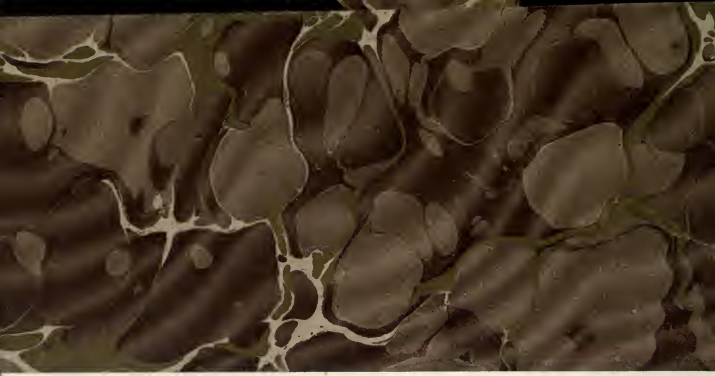

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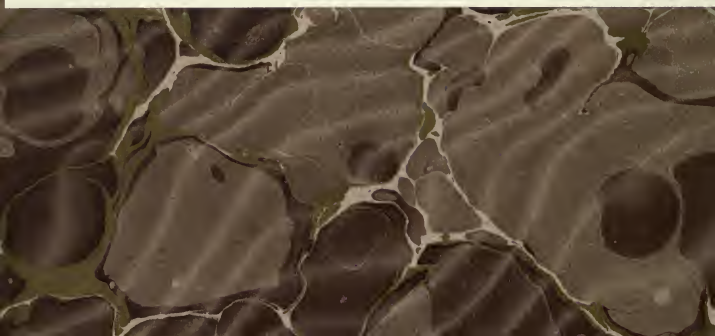

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THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

VOL. IV.

" Who by repentance is not satisfy'd,
Is not of heaven, nor earth."

SHAKSPEARE.

THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

The time of life is ſhort;
To ſpend that ſhortneſs baſely, were too long,
If life did ride upon a dial's point,
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.

SHAKSPEARE.

BY

MISS PORTER.

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1803.

THADDEUS OF WARSAW.

CHAP. I.

THE firſt week of the Count's confinement was rendered leſs intolerable, by the daily viſits of Mrs. Robſon; who, having brought his drawing materials, enabled him, through the means of the printſeller, to purchaſe ſome civility from the brutal and hardened people who were his gaolers. After the good woman had performed her diurnal kindneſs, Thaddeus uſed to turn to the ſad circumference of his miſerable apartment to ſeek amuſement. When his pencil had accompliſhed its taſk, it wearied him: When he took up a book, having read it before, it failed to engage him. He poſſeſſed nothing to beguile the tedious day, and more tedious night. His ſpirit was in ſolitude; in the moſt diſmal

ſolitude; baniſhed and ſhut out from all that could render life deſirable.

The elaſticity and enterpriſe of ſoul, inherent in youth, renders no calamity ſo difficult to be borne, as is the fettering of its beſt years and moſt active virtues, within the walls of a priſon. Thaddeus felt this benumbing conviction in every pulſe of his ardent and energetic heart. He retraced all that he had been. He looked on what he was. Though he had reaped glory when a boy, his '*noon of manhood*,' his evening ſun, was to waſte its light, and ſet, in captivity.

At ſhort and diſtant intervals, ſuch melancholy reveries gave place to the pitying image of Mary Beaufort. It ſometimes viſited him in the day, it always was his companion during night. He courted her lovely idea, as a ſpell that for a while ſtole him from painful reflections. With an entranced heart, he recalled every lineament of her beautiful face, every diſſolving note of that voice, which had hurried him into the raſhneſs of touching her hand. One moment, he preſſed her gold chain cloſer

to

to his heart, almoſt believing what Lady Tinemouth had inſinuated; the next, he would ſigh over his credulity, and return with deſpondent, though equally intenſe feeling, to her bewitching recollection.

The more he pondered on the purity of her manners, the elevated principles to which he could trace her actions, and, above all, the benevolent confidence with which ſhe had ever treated him, (a man contemned by one part of her acquaintance, and merely received on truſt by the remainder,) the more he found reaſons to admire her character and adore herſelf. When he drew a compariſon between Miſs Beaufort, and women of the ſame quality, whom he had ſeen in England and in other countries, he contemplated with delighted wonder that ſpotleſs mind, which having paſſed through the various dangers annexed to wealth and faſhion, ſtill bore itſelf uncontaminated. She was beautiful, and ſhe did not regard it; ſhe was accompliſhed, but ſhe did not attempt a diſplay: what ſhe had acquired from education, the graces had ſo incorporated with her native in-

telligence, that the whole perfection of her character ſeemed to have been ſtamped at once by the beneficent hand of Providence.

Thaddeus never felt her numberleſs attractions ſo faſcinating, as when witneſſing the generous eagerneſs with which, forgetful of her own almoſt unparallelled talents, ſhe pointed out merit, and diſpenſed applauſe to the deſerving. Mary's nature was compoſed entirely of the gentleſt elements, unalloyed by indiſcrimination or inſipidity. Whilſt the Count ſaw that the urbanity of her diſpoſition made her politeneſs univerſal, he perceived that neither rank, riches, nor ſplendour, could extract from her boſom, one ſpark of that lambent flame, which ſtreamed from her heart like fire to the ſun, towards the united glory of genius and goodneſs.

He dwelt on this lovely, unſophiſticated character, with an enthuſiaſm bordering on idolatry. He recollected that ſhe had been educated by the mother of Pembroke Somerſet; and, turning from the double remembrance, with a ſigh fraught with all the

the bitterneſs and ſweetneſs of love, he acknowledged, how much wiſdom (which includes virtue) gives ſpirit and immortality to beauty; "Yes," cried he, "it is the fragrance of the flower, which lives after the bloom of its leaves are withered."

From the like ſeducing day-dreams, Thaddeus was one evening awakened by the entrance of the jailor into his cell. The man preſented a ſealed paper, and told him that he had brought it from a ſtranger, who, having paid the debts for which he was confined, had immediately withdrawn, deſiring that that packet might be delivered to Mr. Conſtantine.

Scarcely crediting this information, Thaddeus haſtily opened the letter, hoping that it might throw ſome light on his benefactor: a blank cover, incloſing notes to the amount of fifty pounds, preſented itſelf. Surpriſed at this, he told the man to leave him, who, without much ceremony, was ſtaring at the money over his ſhoulder; and ſitting down, he tried to think who could have acted ſo gene-

rouſly, and yet be ſo careful to hide their bounty.

He had ſeen ſufficient proofs of a heedleſs want of charity in Miſs Euphemia Dundas, to lead him to ſuppoſe that ſhe could not be ſo munificent and ſolicitous for concealment. Beſides, how could ſhe have learnt his ſituation? He thought it was impoſſible: and that impoſſibility compelled an erratic hope of his preſent liberty having ſprung from the friendſhip of Miſs Beaufort, to paſs by him with painful ſwiftneſs.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, ſtarting from his chair, "It is the indefatigable ſpirit of Lady Sara Roos, that I recogniſe in this deed! The generous, but unhappy intereſt which ſhe yet takes in my fate, has diſcovered my laſt misfortune, and thus ſeeks to relieve me!"

The moment he had conceived this ſuppoſition, he believed it; and, taking up a pen, with a grateful, though diſturbed ſoul, he addreſſed to her ladyſhip the following guarded note:

"*To*

" *To the Right Honourable Lady Sara Roos.*

" An unfortunate exile, who feels himſelf already overpowered by the ſenſe of not having deſerved the notice which Lady Sara Roos has hitherto deigned to take of his misfortunes, was this morning liberated from priſon in a manner ſo generous and delicate, that he can affix the act to no other than the noble heart of her ladyſhip.

" The object of this bounty, bending under the weight of obligations which he cannot repay, begs permiſſion to re-incloſe the bills which Lady Sara's agent tranſmitted to him; but, as the deed which procures his freedom cannot be recalled, he accepts, with the moſt grateful emotions, that new inſtance of her ladyſhip's goodneſs.

" *Newgate.*"

Thaddeus diſpatched the letter by a porter, and was preparing another to acquaint Mrs. Robſon of his releaſe, when the good woman made her appear-

ance. She haſtened up to him with an animated countenance, and exclaimed before he had time to ſpeak, "Dear Sir! I have ſeen a dear, ſweet lady, who has promiſed not to ſleep till you are out of this horrid place!"

The ſuſpicions of the Count, that his benefactreſs was indeed Lady Sara Roos, were now confirmed: ſeating his landlady in the only chair which furniſhed the apartment; to ſatisfy her ſenſitive decorum he took his ſtation on the table, and then ſaid, "the lady has already fulfilled her engagement; I am free; and only wait for an anſwer to my acknowledgements, before I quit the priſon."

At this aſſurance, the delighted Mrs. Robſon, crying and laughing by turns, did not ceaſe her ejaculations of joy, till the meſſenger, who had taken the letter to St. James's place, returned with a reply written by her ladyſhip, and evidently blotted with tears. Thaddeus took out the re-incloſed bills with a fluſhed cheek, and read as follows:

"I cannot

"I cannot be miſtaken in recogniſing the proud and high-ſoul'd Conſtantine, in the writer of the lines which I hold in my hand. Could any thing have imparted to me more comfort, than your generous belief that there is indeed ſome virtue left in my wretched and repentant heart, it would ariſe from the conſcioufneſs of having been the happy perſon who has ſuccoured you in your diſtreſs. But no; that enjoyment was beyond my deſerving. The bliſs of being the lightener of your ſorrows, was reſerved by heaven for a leſs criminal creature. I did not even know that you were in priſon. Since our dreadful parting, I have never dared to inquire after you; and, much as it might conſole me to ſerve one ſo truly valued, I will not inſult your nice honour by offering any farther inſtance of my friendſhip, than what will evince my ſoul's gratitude to your prayers, and my acquieſcence with the commands of duty.

"My huſband is here, without perceiving the ravages which miſery and remorſe have made in my unhappy heart. Time, perhaps, may render me leſs un-

worthy of his tenderneſs: at preſent I deteſt myſelf.

"I return the bills; you may ſafely uſe them, for they never were mine.

S. R."

The generous heart of Thaddeus bled over every line of this letter. He felt that it bore a ſtamp of truth, which did not leave him a moment in doubt that he owed his releaſe to ſome other hand. Whilſt he folded it up, his ſuſpicions next lighted on Lady Tinemouth. He had received one ſhort letter from her ladyſhip ſince her departure, mentioning Maria's ſtaying in town to meet Mr. Montreſor; Miſs Beaufort's detention on account of Mrs. Dorothy's accident; and cloſing with the intelligence of her own ſafe arrival at the Wold. The idea ſtruck him, that as he had delayed anſwering this letter in conſequence of his late embarraſſment, ſhe had made ſome inquiries regarding him, which having led to a diſcovery of his ſituation, moſt probably Miſs Egerton had viſited Mrs. Robſon by the commands

commands of the Countess, and, finding the information true, had proceeded these lengths to obtain his release.

According to these suppositions, he questioned his landlady about the appearance of the lady whom she had seen. Mrs. Robson replied, "She was indifferent tall, but so wrapped up that I could neither see her face nor figure, though I am certain, from the softness of her voice, she must be both young and handsome. Sweet creature! I am sure she wept two or three times. Besides, she is the most charitable soul alive, next to you, Sir, for she gave me a purse with nineteen guineas; and she told me, she knew your honour's English friends."

This narration, substantiating his hope of Lady Tinemouth being his benefactress, that the kind Maria was her agent; and the gentleman who had defrayed the debt, Mr. Montresor; he found himself easier under an obligation, which a mysterious liberation would have doubled. He knew the Countess's maternal love for him.

To reject her present benefaction, would be to sacrifice gratitude on the altar of morbid delicacy. He felt, that 'nothing can be great, that it is great to despise;' and rather than pain Lady Tinemouth, by relinquishing her bounty, he smothered in his breast the embers of a haughty repulsion, which having burst forth in the first hour of his misfortunes, was ever ready to consume any wish that might engender the weight of obligation.

Thaddeus quitted his cell; and, ordering that a coach might be brought to the great gate of Newgate, he was obeyed; and, with thankfulness to heaven, for again being permitted to taste the wholesome breeze of a free atmosphere, he handed his delighted landlady into the vehicle.

So true it is, that advantages are only appreciated by comparison; when the Count re-entered his humble apartment in St. Martin's-lane, he considered it a palace of luxury, opposed to the dungeon he had left.

"Ah!"

" Ah !" cried Mrs. Robſon, pointing to a chair, " there is the very ſeat in which that dear lady ſat ! Sweet creature ! If I had known that I durſt believe all that ſhe promiſed, I would have fallen on my knees, and kiſſed her feet, for bringing back your dear ſelf !"

" I thank you, my good madam," returned Thaddeus, ſmiling with a brimming eye at ſuch ardent demonſtration of affection; " but where is little Nancy, that I may ſhake hands with her ?"

The child welcomed the Count with thoſe animated expreſſions of joy, inſeparable from a good and inexperienced heart. It being late, he retired at an early hour to his pillow, where he found that repoſe, which had been ſought in vain, within the gloomy and (he ſuppoſed) eternal walls of a priſon.

In the morning, he was awakened by the light footſteps of his pretty waiting-maid entering the front room. His chamber door being open, he aſked her what was the hour ? ſhe replied, nine o'clock; adding, that ſhe had brought a letter, which

one

one of the waiters from Slaughter's coffee-houſe had juſt left, with the information, that he did ſo by the orders of a footman in rich livery.

Thaddeus deſired it might be given to him. The child obeyed, and quitted the room. He ſaw that the ſuperſcription was in Miſs Dundas's hand; and opening it with pleaſure, becauſe every thing intereſted him which came from the houſe that contained Mary Beaufort, to his amazement and conſternation, he read the following paſſionate and intemperate lines:

"*To Mr. Conſtantine.*

"Mr. Conſtantine,

"By a miraculous circumſtance, this morning, your deep and daring plan of villainy has been diſcovered to Lady D— and myſelf. The deluded victim, whom your arts and falſhoods, would have ſeduced to diſhonour her family by connecting herſelf with a vagabond, has at length ſeen through her error; and now deteſts you as much as ever your inſuffer-

able presumption could have hoped she would distinguish you with her regard. Thank Heaven! you are completely exposed! This young woman of fashion (whose name I will not trust in the same page with yours) has made a full confession of your villainous seductions; of her own reprehensible weakness, in ever having deigned to listen to one so low. She desires me to assure you, that she hates you; and commands you never again to attempt the insolence of appearing in her sight. Indeed, this is the language of every soul in this house, of Lady D———, Mrs D——— S———, Miss B———, besides that of D—— D——."

Harley-street.

Thaddeus read this ridiculous letter twice, before he could perfectly comprehend its meaning. In a paroxysm of indignation at the vile subterfuge under which he did not doubt Euphemia had screened some accidental discovery of her absurd passion, he hastily threw on his clothes, and determined, though in defiance

of

of Miſs Dundas's mandates, to fly to Harley-ſtreet, and clear himſelf in the eyes of Mary and her venerable aunt.

Having flown rather than walked, he arrived in ſight of Lady Dundas's houſe, juſt as a coach, full of her ladyſhip's maids and packages drove from the door. Hurrying up the ſtep, he aſked the porter who was ſtanding in the hall, if Mrs. Dorothy Somerſet were at home.

"No," replied the man; "ſhe and Miſs Beaufort, with Miſs Dundas and Mr. Somerſet, went out of town this morning by eight o'clock; and my lady and Miſs Euphemia, about an hour ago, ſet off for Dumbarton, in Scotland, where they mean to ſtay all the ſummer."

At this information, which ſeemed to be the ſealing of his condemnation with Mary, Thaddeus felt his heart pierced to the core. Unacquainted, till this moment, with the torments attending the calumniated, he could ſcarcely ſubdue the tempeſt in his breaſt, when forced to receive the conviction, that the woman whom he loved above all the world, now regarded

him

him as not merely a villain, but the meaneſt of villains.

He returned home, indignant and agitated. The knowledge that Pembroke Somerſet had probably liſtened to the falſhoods of Euphemia, without ſuggeſting one word in defence of him who had once been his friend, inflicted a pang more deadly than the reſt. Shutting himſelf within his apartment, toſſed and tortured in ſoul, he traverſed the room, till, reſolving to ſeek redreſs from the advice of Lady Tinemouth, he deſcended the ſtairs; and telling Mrs. Robſon, that he ſhould leave London next morning for Lincolnſhire; begged her not to be uneaſy on his account, as he went on buſineſs, and would return in a few days.

The good woman almoſt wept at this intelligence; and when ſhe ſaw him depart, followed the wheels of the ſtage-coach with ſighs and bleſſings. For the Count, his long journey paſſed in reſentful reveries, or affectionate anticipations of the moment when he ſhould pour out his gragratitude to the maternal tenderneſs of

Lady

Lady Tinemouth; and learn from her delicacy and experience, how to wipe from the minds of Mrs. Dorothy Somerset and her lovely niece, sentiments of him, so dishonouring, torturing, and false.

CHAP. II.

THE porter at Lady Dundas's had been ſtrictly correct in his account reſpecting the deſtination of the diſperſed members of her ladyſhip's houſehold.

Whilſt Pembroke Somerſet was ſullenly executing his forced act of benevolence at Newgate, Miſs Dundas ſuddenly took it into her ever ſcheming head, to compare the merits of Somerſet's rich expectancy, with the pennyleſs certainty of Laſcelles. She conſidered, how high the wife of a baronet ſtood in the train of precedence over the humble *cara ſpoſa* of a man, owning no other rank, than a reflected luſtre, ſhot from the coronet of an elder brother. Lady Somerſet, ſhe thought, would be a prettier ſalutation, than the empty courteſy of Honourable. Beſides, Pembroke was very handſome; Laſcelles, only tolerably ſo: indeed ſome women had preſumed to call him ugly; but they were odd

odd mortals, who, not believing the *metempſychoſis* doctrine of the taylor and his decorating adjuncts, could not comprehend, that although a mere human creature can have no ſuch property, a man of faſhion may poſſeſs an *elixir vitæ*, which makes age youth; deformity beauty; and even transforms vice into virtue.

In ſpite of remembrance, which reminded Diana, how often, amidſt a little bevy of females, ſhe had contended with acrimony, that all Mr. Laſcelles's teeth were his own; that his noſe was not a bit too long, being an exact *fac-ſimile* of the ſame feature which reared its ſublime curve over the capacious mouth of his noble brother Lord Caſtle-Conway; notwithſtanding this, the Pythagorean pretenſions of faſhion began to loſe their aſcendancy; and, in the receſſes of her mind, when Miſs Dundas compared the light elegance of Pembroke's figure, with the heavy limbs of her preſent lover; Pembroke's dark and ever-animated eyes, with the gooſeberry orbs of Laſcelles; ſhe dropped the parallel; and reſolving to captivate the heir of Somerſet Caſtle,

Caſtle, admitted no remorſe at jilting the brother of Caſtle-Conway.

To this end, before Pembroke's return from Newgate, Diana had told her mother of her intention to accompany Mrs. Dorothy down to the baronet's; where ſhe would remain, till her ladyſhip ſhould think Euphemia might be truſted to rejoin her in town. Neither Mrs. Dorothy nor Miſs Beaufort liked this arrangement; and, with an aching heart, the latter prepared to take her ſeat next morning, at an early hour, in the travelling equipage which was to convey them all into Leiceſterſhire.

At ſupper, Pembroke ſullenly informed Mary of the ſucceſs of her commands: that Mr. Conſtantine was free. This aſſurance, though imparted with ſo ungracious an air, laid her head with leſs diſtraction on her pillow: and, as ſhe ſtepped into Sir Robert's carriage next day, enabled her with more eaſe to deck her lips with ſmiles. She felt that the penetrating eyes of her couſin were never withdrawn from her

her face; offended with his perverſeneſs and their ſcrutiny, ſhe tried to baffle their inſpection. She attempted gaiety, when ſhe gladly would have wept. But when the coach mounted the top of Highgate Hill, and diſcovered a laſt view of that city, which contained the being, whoſe happineſs was the ſole object of her thoughts and prayers, ſhe leaned out of the window, to hide a tear which ſhe could not repreſs; feeling that another and another would ſtart, ſhe complained of the duſt; and, pulling her veil over her eyes, drew back into the corner of the carriage. The trembling of her voice and hands during the performance of this little artifice, too well explained to Pembroke what was paſſing in her mind: at once diſpelling the gloom which had ſhrouded his own countenance, he turned towards her with a compaſſionate tenderneſs in his words and looks, which, gradually ſoftening her diſpleaſure into the eaſy converſation of reciprocal affection, rendered the remainder of their long journey leſs irkſome.

When,

When, at the end of the ſecond day, Mary found herſelf in the old avenue leading to the baſe of the hill that ſuſtains the revered walls of Somerſet Caſtle, a mingled emotion took poſſeſſion of her breaſt; and when the carriage had attained the foot of the higheſt terrace, ſhe ſprung impatiently out of it, and haſtening up the ſtone ſtairs into the front hall, met her uncle at the door of the breakfaſt-parlour, where he held out his arms to receive her.

"My Mary! My darling!" cried he, embracing her now wet cheek, and ſtraining her throbbing boſom to his own, "Why, my dear love," added he, almoſt carrying her into the room, "I am afraid that this viſit to town has injured your nerves! Whence ariſes this agitation?"

Mary knew that it had injured her peace; and, now that the flood gates of her long-repelled tears had opened, it was beyond her art, or the ſoothings of her affectionate uncle, to ſtay them. A moment after, her couſin entered the room, followed

followed by Mrs. Dorothy and Miſs Dundas. Miſs Beaufort haſtily roſe to conceal what ſhe could not check, and, kiſſing Sir Robert's hand, aſked permiſſion to retire, under the pretence of regaining thoſe ſpirits which had been diſſipated by the fatigues of her journey.

In her own chamber, ſhe did indeed ſtruggle to recover herſelf. She ſhuddered at the impetuoſity of her feelings, when once abandoned of their reins; and, reſolved from this hour to hold a ſtricter guard over the conſequences of her ill-fated paſſion.

She ſat down in the window of her apartment, and, looking down the extenſive vale of Somſerſet, watched the romantic wanderings of the Witham winding its courſe through the domains of the caſtle, and nouriſhing the roots of thoſe immenſe oaks, which ſtill wave their centential arms over its quiet ſtream. Mary reflected on the revolution which had taken place in her mind, ſince ſhe walked on its banks the evening that preceded her viſit to London. Then, ſhe was free as air, and gay

as

as the lark; each object was bright and lovely to her eyes: hope seemed to woo her from every green slope, every remote dingle: all nature breathed of joy, because her own breast was the home of gladness. Now, all continued the same, but she was changed. Surrounded by beauty, she acknowledged its presence; the sweetness of the flowers bathed her senses in fragrance; the setting sun, gilding the heights, shed a yellow glory over the distant hills; the birds were hailing the fallen dew that spangled every leaf; Mary gazed around, and sighed heavily when she said to herself, "Even in this paradise I shall be wretched. Alas! my heart is far away! My soul lingers about one, whom I may never more behold! about one, who may soon cease to remember that such a being as Mary Beaufort is in existence. "He will leave England!" cried she, raising her hands and eyes to the glowing heavens, "He will live, he will die, far, far, from me! In a distant land he will wed another, whilst I shall know no wish that strays from him."

Whilſt Mary indulged in theſe ſoliloquies, ſhe forgot both Sir Robert and her reſolution, till he ſent her maid to beg, that if ſhe were better, ſhe would come down and make tea for him. At this ſummons, Miſs Beaufort dried her eyes and deſcended with an aſſumed ſerenity to the ſaloon, where the family were now aſſembled. The Baronet having greeted Miſs Dundas with an hoſpitable welcome, ſeated himſelf between his ſiſter and his ſon; and, whilſt he received his favourite beverage from the hands of the lovely Mary, he found that comfort had once more reentered his boſom.

Sir Robert Somerſet, was a man whoſe appearance alone muſt have attracted reſpect. His perſon bore the ſtamp of dignity; and his manners, which poſſeſſed the exquiſite poliſh of travel, ſecured him univerſal eſteem. Though little beyond fifty, the various perplexities to which he had been obnoxious in youth, had not only rendered his hair perfectly grey, but by clouding his once brilliant eyes with thoughtfulneſs, had marked his aſpect with old

age and melancholy. The baronet's entrance into gay life was celebrated for wit and vivacity: He was the animating ſpirit of every party; when, ſtrange to tell, an inexplicable metamorphoſis took place. Soon after his return from abroad, his marriage with Miſs Beaufort (a woman whom he loved to madneſs) taking place, exceſs of happineſs ſeemed to change his nature, and gave his character a gradual tinge of ſadneſs. After her ladyſhip's death, the alteration in his mind, produced ſtill more extraordinary effects, and ſhewed itſelf more than once in all the terrors of threatening inſanity.

The lateſt attack of the kind which aſſailed him, was about the middle of laſt winter; it ſeized him under the appearance of a ſwoon, as he ſat reading the newſpaper at breakfaſt; he was carried to bed, and awoke in a delirium, which menaced either immediate death, or the total extinction of his intellects. However, neither of theſe dreads being confirmed, in the courſe of ſeveral weeks, to the wonder of every body, he recovered both his health and his ſound mind. Notwithſtanding

this happy event, the circumſtances of his danger having deeply affected the hearts of his family, he continued to be a very anxious object of attention. Indeed ſolicitude did not terminate with them: the munificence of his diſpoſition having ſpread itſelf through every county in which he owned a rood of land, as many prayers aſcended for the repoſe of his ſpirit, as had ever petitioned heaven from the mouths of '*monkiſh beadſmen*,' in favour of power or virtue.

Since the demiſe of Lady Somerſet, this excellent man, drew all his comfort from the amiable qualities of his ſon Pembroke. Sometimes in his livelier hours, which came '*like angel viſits, few and far between*,' he amuſed himſelf with the playfulneſs of the little Earl of Arun, the pompous erudition of Mr. Loftus (who was become his lordſhip's tutor), and giving occaſional entertainments to the gentry of his neighbourhood.

Of all the perſonages contained within this circle, (which the hoſpitality of Sir Robert extended to a circumference of thirty

thirty miles,) Lord Berrington was the moſt reſpected.

The numerous viſitants who attended the Somerſet-hunt, were too gay to be admitted with intimacy. A ſon of one of theſe itinerant families, (which, ever on the full chace of pleaſure, had fixed itſelf at Woodhill Lodge, on the right of the little town of Grantham,) by calling at the caſtle ſoon after the arrival of the London party, cauſed a trifling change in its diſpoſition.

When Richard Shafto was uſhered into the ſaloon, he nodded to Sir Robert, and, turning his back on the ladies, told Pembroke that he had ridden to Somerſet on purpoſe to bring him to Woodhill Lodge.

"Upon my ſoul," cried he, "if you don't come, I will leave my mother. Would you believe it, that on account of Sir Hallerand having gone out plenipotentiary to ſome damned place on the continent, ſhe has taken it into her head to ruſticate in the country till his return? Upon my ſoul, I am moped to death! There is not a creature but yourſelf with-

in twenty miles, that I would ſpeak to; not a man worth a ſixpence. I wiſh to heaven my father had broken his neck before he had accepted that raſcally embaſſy, which encumbers me with the charge of an old woman!"

After this dutiful wiſh, which brought down a weighty admonition from Mrs. Dorothy, the young gentleman promiſed to beg her pardon for his ill manners, provided ſhe could perſuade Pembroke to accompany him to the lodge. Mr. Somerſet did not evince much alacrity in his conſent; but purpoſely to rid his family of ſuch a noiſy gueſt, he roſe from his chair, and acquieſcing in the ſacrifice of a few days to good-nature, bade his father farewel, and gave orders for a ride to Grantham.

As ſoon as the gentlemen had left the ſaloon, Miſs Dundas ran up ſtairs, and, from her dreſſing-room window in the weſt tower, purſued the ſteps of their horſes cantering down the winding ſteep into the high-road. An abrupt angle of the hill hiding them at once from her view, ſhe turned

turned round with a toſs of the head, and, flinging herſelf into a chair, exclaimed, "Now I ſhall be bored to death by this abominable profing family! I wiſh the devil had taken Shafto, before he thought of coming here!"

In conſequence of the humour which engendered the above no very flattering compliment to the ſociety at the caſtle, Miſs Dundas deſcended to the dining-room, with ſulky looks and a chilling air. She ſwallowed what the baronet laid on her plate, with an indolent appetite, cut her meat into mince, and dragged the vegetables over the table-cloth. Mrs. Dorothy coloured at this indifference to the uſual neatneſs of her damaſk covers; but Miſs Dundas was ſo completely in the ſullens, that, heedleſs of any other feelings than her own, ſhe continued to pull and knock about the things juſt as her ill-humour dictated.

The petulance of this lady's behaviour, did not in the leaſt aſſimilate with the cuſtomary tranquillity of Sir Robert's table; and, when the cloth was drawn, he could

not refrain from expreſſing his concern, that Somerſet Caſtle appeared ſo little calculated to afford ſatisfaction to a daughter of Lady Dundas's. Miſs Dundas attempted ſome awkward declaration, that ſhe never was more amuſed, never happier. But the ſmall credit which Sir Robert gave to her aſſertion, was fully honoured the next morning, by the ready manner in which ſhe accepted a caſual invitation to ſpend the enſuing day and night at Lady Shafto's. Her ladyſhip called on Mrs Dorothy, and intending to have a party in the evening, invited the two young ladies to return with her to Grantham, and be her gueſts for a week. Mary, whoſe ſpirits had much to combat, before they could regain their former ſerenity, declined her civility; while, with a gleam of pleaſure, ſhe heard it accepted by Miſs Dundas, who departed with her ladyſhip for the lodge.

Whilſt the enraptured Diana, all life and glee, bowled along with Lady Shafto, anticipating the delight of once more feating

ing herſelf at the elbow of Pembroke Somerſet; Mary Beaufort, relieved from a load of ill-requited attentions, walked out into the park, to enjoy, in ſolitude, the intoxicating ſorrow of thinking on the unhappy and far diſtant Conſtantine. Regardleſs of the way, her footſteps, though robbed of elaſticity by nightly watching and daily regret, led her beyond the park, to the ruined church of Woolthorpe, its ſouthern boundary. Her eyes were fixed on the oppoſite horizon. It was the extremity of Leiceſterſhire; and far, far, behind thoſe hills, was that London, which contained the object deareſt to her ſoul. The wind ſeemed ſcarcely to breathe as it floated towards her; but it came from that quarter; and, believing it laden with every ſweet which love can fancy, ſhe threw back her veil, to inhale its balm; then blaming herſelf for ſuch baby weakneſs, ſhe turned bluſhing, homewards, and wept at what ſhe thought, the unreaſonable tenacity of her paſſion.

The arrival of Miſs Dundas at the lodge, was communicated to the two young men on their return from a traverſe on foot of half the country in queſt of game. The news extracted an oath from Shafto; but rather pleaſed Somerſet, who augured ſome amuſement from her attempts at wit and judgment. Tired to death; and, dinner being over when they entered, with ravenous appetites they ſwallowed their uncomfortable meal in a remote room; then throwing themſelves along the ſofas, yawned and ſlept for near two hours.

Pembroke waking firſt, ſuddenly jumped on the floor, and ſhaking his diſordered clothes, exclaimed, "Shafto! Get up. This is abominable! Efaith, I cannot help thinking, that if we ſpend one half of our days in pleaſure, and the other in lolling off its fatigues, we ſhall have paſt through life more to our ſhame than our profit!"

"Then you may take the ſhame, and leave me the profit;" cried his companion, turning himſelf round: "ſo good night to you."

Pembroke

Pembroke rang the bell. A ſervant entered.

"What o'clock is it?"

"Eight, Sir."

"Who are up ſtairs?"

"My lady, Sir, and a large party of ladies."

"There now!" cried Shafto, yawning and kicking out his legs. "You ſurely won't go to be bored with ſuch damned maudlin company?"

"I chooſe to join your mother," replied Pembroke. "Are there any gentlemen, Stephen?"

"One, Sir; Doctor Denton."

"Confound you!" roared Shafto, "what do you ſtand jabbering there for? You won't let me ſleep. Can't you ſend away the fellow, and go look yourſelf?"

"I will, if you can perſuade yourſelf to riſe off that ſofa, and come with me?"

"May the devil catch me if I do! Get about your buſineſs, and leave me to mine."

"You are incorrigible, Shafto!" returned Pembroke, as he cloſed the door.

He aſcended the ſtairs to change his dreſs, and before he gained the ſecond flight, he had reſolved, not to ſpend two other whole days in the company of ſuch an unmannered, unidea'd cub.

On Mr. Somerſet's entrance into Lady Shafto's drawing-room, he ſaw many ladies, but only one gentleman, who was the before-mentioned Doctor Denton; a poor, ſhallow headed, paraſitical animal. Pembroke, having ſeen ſufficient of him to deſpiſe his pretenſions both to ſcience and ſincerity, paſſed his wide ſmirk and eager inquiries, with a diſtancing bow, and took his ſeat by the ſide of the now delighted Miſs Dundas. The vivid ſpirits of Diana, which ſhe managed ſhould be peculiarly ſparkling when he made his appearance, entertained him; when compared with the inſipid ſameneſs of her ladyſhip, or the brutal ribaldry of her ſon, her mirth was wit, and her remarks wiſdom.

"Dear Mr. Somerſet!" cried ſhe, "how good you are to break this ſad ſolemnity. I vow, until you ſhewed your face, I thought

thought the days of paganiſm had revived, and that, lacking of men, we were aſſembled here to celebrate the myſteries of the *Bona Dea*."

"Lacking of men!" replied he ſmiling, "You have overlooked the aſſiduous Doctor Denton?"

"O, no; that is a cameleon in man's clothing. He breathes air, he eats air, he emits air; and a moſt peſtilential breath it is: only obſerve how he is pouring nonſenſe into the ear of yonder ſable ſtatue."

Pembroke directed his eyes as Miſs Dundas had deſired him; they fell on Doctor Denton, who ſtood whiſpering, bowing, and preſſing his breaſt, before a lady in black, who ſat, almoſt concealed by the window curtain. The lady put up her lip, the Doctor proceeded, ſhe frowned, he would not be daunted, the lady roſe from her ſeat, and, ſlightly bending her head, croſſed the room. Whilſt Mr. Somerſet was contemplating her majeſtic figure and fine, though pale features, Miſs Dundas touched his arm, ſmiling

miling ſatirically, ſhe repeated in an affected voice:

"Hail, penſive Nun! devout and holy!
"Hail, divineſt Melancholy!"

"If ſhe be melancholy," returned Pembroke, unconſciouſly ſighing, "I would for ever ſay,

"Hence, unholy Mirth, of Folly born!"

Miſs Dundas reddened. She had never liked this intereſting woman, who was not only too handſome for competition, but poſſeſſed of an underſtanding whoſe temper would not tolerate ignorance and preſumption. Diana's ill-natured impertinence having ſeveral times received deſerved chaſtiſement from that quarter, ſhe was vexed to the ſoul, when Pembroke cloſed his animated reſponſe with the queſtion, "Who is ſhe?"

Miſs Dundas, rather too bitterly for the ſucceſs of her deſign on his heart, iterated his words, and then anſwered: "Why, ſhe is crazed. She lives in a place called Harrowby Abbey, at the top of that hill;" continued ſhe, pointing through the oppoſite

ſite window to a diſtant riſing ground, on which the moon was ſhining brightly; "and, I am told, frightens the cottagers out of their wits by her midnight ſtrolls."

Hardly knowing how to credit this wild account, Pembroke aſked his informer, if ſhe were ſerious.

"Never more ſo."

"Her eyes are uncommonly beautiful. "You muſt be jeſting," returned he; "they ſeem perfectly reaſonable."

Miſs Dundas laughed. "Like Hamlet's, they '*know not ſeems, but have that within which paſſeth ſhew!*' believe me, ſhe is mad enough for bedlam; and of that I could ſoon convince you. I wonder how Lady Shafto thought of inviting her at all!"

"Well," cried Pembroke, "if thoſe features announce madneſs, I ſhall never admire a look of ſenſe again."

"Bleſs us!" exclaimed Miſs Dundas, "you are wonderfully ſtruck! Don't you ſee, ſhe is old enough to be your mother?"

"That may be," anſwered he, ſmiling; "nevertheleſs, ſhe is one of the moſt lovely women

women I ever beheld. Come, tell me her name."

"I will satisfy you in a moment," rejoined Diana; "and then away with your rhapsodies! She is the very Countess of Tinemouth, who brought, as her most particular friend, that vagabond foreigner to our house, who would have run off with Phemy."

"Lady Tinemouth!" exclaimed Pembroke, "I never saw her before. My ever lamented mother met her whilst I was abroad, and she esteemed her highly. Pray, present me to her!"

"Impossible!" replied Diana, vexed at the turn his curiosity had taken; "I wrote to her about the insidious wretch, and now we don't speak."

"Then, I will introduce myself," answered he: he was moving away, when Miss Dundas (whose delight lay in tormenting those whom she could not subjugate,) caught hold of his arm, and, by some attempts at badinage and raillery, withheld him in his place, till the Countess

Counteſs made her farewel curtſey to Lady Shafto, and the door was cloſed.

Diſappointed at this manœuvre, Pembroke re-ſeated himſelf, and pondering on what could be the reaſon why his aunt and couſin had not heard of her ladyſhip's arrival at Harrowby, he determined to wait on her next day. Regardleſs of every word which the provoked Diana addreſſed to him, he remained ſilent and meditating, till the loud voice of Shafto roaring in his ear, made him turn ſuddenly round. Miſs Dundas tried to laugh at his reverie, though ſhe knew that ſuch a flagrant inſtance of inattention was death to her hopes; but Pembroke, not inclined to partake in the jeſt, coolly aſked his beariſh companion what he wanted?

"Nothing, upon my ſoul," cried he, "but to hear you ſpeak. What the devil were you looking at on the carpet? Miſs Dundas tells me, you have loſt your heart to yonder grim Counteſs, that my mother wanted me to gallant up the hill?"

"Shafto!"

"Shafto!" anſwered Pembroke, riſing from his chair, "You cannot be ſpeaking of Lady Tinemouth?"

"Efaith, I am!" roared he: "and if ſhe be ſuch a ſcamp as to live without a carriage, I won't be her lacquey for nothing. Two miles are not to be tramped over by me, with no better companion than an old painted woman of quality."

"Surely you cannot mean," returned Pembroke, "that her ladyſhip was to walk from hence?"

"Without a doubt," cried Shafto, burſting into a horſe laugh: "you would be clever to ſee my Lady Stingy in any other carriage than her clogs."

Irritated at the malice of Miſs Dundas, and deſpiſing the vulgar illiberality of Shafto, Pembroke, without deigning a reply, abruptly left the room; and, haſtening out of the houſe, ran, rather than walked, in hopes of overtaking the Counteſs and her ſervant before they reached Harrowby.

He

He croſſed the little wooden bridge that lies over the Witham; he ſcoured the fields; and, leaping every ſtile and gate which impeded his way, gained the incloſure that leads to the top of the hill, where he deſcried a light moving, and very rightly conjectured it muſt be the lantern carried by her ladyſhip's attendant. Another ſpring over the ſhattered fence cleared all obſtacles; and he found himſelf cloſe to Lady Tinemouth, who was leaning on the arm of a gentleman. Pembroke ſtopped at this ſight; ſuppoſing that ſhe had been met by ſome perſon belonging to the town, whoſe readier gallantry now occupied the place which Miſs Dundas had prevented him from filling, he was preparing to retreat, when Lady Tinemouth happening to turn her head, imagined, from the heſitating embarraſſment of his manner, that he was a ſtranger who had loſt his way, and accoſted him with that inquiry.

Pembroke bowed in ſome confuſion; and related the ſimple fact, of his having heard that ſhe had quitted Lady Shafto's without any guard but the ſervant; and, that

that he had hurried out, the moment he had learned the circumſtance, to proffer his ſervices. The Counteſs not only thanked him for ſuch attention, but, conſtrained by a civility which ſhe would rather at that inſtant have been excuſed from, aſked him to walk forward with her to the Abbey, and partake of ſome refreſhment.

"But," added ſhe, "though I perfectly recollect having ſeen another gentleman in Lady Shafto's room, beſides Doctor Denton, I have not the honour of knowing your name?"

"It is Somerſet," returned Pembroke: "I am the ſon of that Lady Somerſet, who, during the laſt year of her life, had the happineſs of being intimate with your ladyſhip."

Lady Tinemouth declared her pleaſure at this meeting; and, turning to the gentleman who was walking in ſilence by her ſide, "Mr. Conſtantine," ſaid ſhe, "allow me to introduce to you the couſin of the amiable Miſs Beaufort."

Thaddeus, who had too well recogniſed the voice of his falſe friend, in the firſt accents

which

which he addreſſed to the Counteſs, with a ſwelling heart, bent his head to the cold ſalutation of Somerſet. Hearing that her ladyſhip's companion was no other than the ſame Conſtantine, whom he had liberated from priſon, Pembroke was ſtimulated with a deſire to unmaſk his double villainy to Lady Tinemouth; and, feeling a curioſity to ſee the man whoſe perſon and meretricious qualities had blinded even the judgment of his aunt; he readily obeyed the ſecond invitation of the Counteſs, and conſented to go home and ſup with her.

Meanwhile, Thaddeus was agitated with a variety of emotions. Every tone of Pembroke's voice, reminding him of happier days, pierced to his heart, whilſt a ſenſe of his ingratitude, awakened all the pride and indignation of his ſoul. Full of reſentment, he determined that whatever might be the reſult, he would not ſhrink from an interview the anticipation of which, Pembroke (who had received from himſelf an intimation of the name that he had aſſumed,) ſeemed to regard with ſuch unfeeling indifference.

Lady

Lady Tinemouth, having no conception that Somerſet and the Count had any perſonal knowledge of each other, begged the gentlemen to follow her into the ſupper-parlour. Pembroke, with no inconſiderable degree of rudeneſs, puſhed by his friend, and arrived at the ſide of the Counteſs, before Thaddeus, who felt himſelf inſulted in every nerve, could ſummon coolneſs to enter the room with a compoſed ſtep. He did ſo; and, taking off his hat, laid it down on the ſofa. Lady Tinemouth began to expreſs her joy at his arrival. The eyes of Pembroke now became fixed on the calm but ſevere countenance, of the man before him: he ſtood by the table with an air ſo full of princely greatneſs, that the candid heart of Pembroke Somerſet ſoon whiſpered to him, "*Sure nothing ill can dwell in ſuch a breaſt!*"

Still his eyes followed him, when he turned round, and when he bent his head to anſwer the Counteſs, in a voice ſo low, that it eſcaped his ear. Pembroke was bewildered. There was a ſomething in the features,

features, in the mien, of this foreigner, ſo like his friend Sobieſki! But then, Sobieſki was all frankneſs and animation; his cheek blazed with the rich colouring of youth and happineſs; his eyes flaſhed pleaſure, and his lips were decked with ſmiles. On the reverſe, the perſon before him was not only conſiderably taller, and of more manly proportions, but his face was pale, reſerved, and haughty: beſides, he did not appear even to recollect the name of Somerſet; and, what made the ſuppoſition at once untenable, his own was Conſtantine.

Theſe reaſonings having paſſed through the mind of Pembroke in leſs time than they can be repeated, left his heart unſatisfied. The mounted blood remained on his cheeks; his boſom beat; and, keeping his ſearching and ardent gaze rivetted on the man who was either his friend or his counterpart, Lady Tinemouth withdrew from the table, and the eyes of the two young men met. Thaddeus turned paler than before: there is an intelligence in the interchange of looks which cannot be miſtaken; it is the communication of ſouls,

and

and there is no deception in their language. Pembroke flew forward, and catching hold of his friend's hand, exclaimed in an impetuous voice, "Am I right? Are you not Sobieski?"

"I am," returned Thaddeus, half choaked with emotion, and hardly knowing what to understand by Somerset's behaviour.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, still grasping his hand, "and can you have forgotten your friend Pembroke Somerset?"

The ingenuous heart of Thaddeus felt the words and manner of Pembroke to be the language of truth; and, trusting that some mistake had involved his former conduct, he at once cast off all suspicion; and, throwing his arms round him, strained him to his breast, and burst into tears.

Lady Tinemouth, who, during this scene, had stood mute with surprise, now advanced to the friends, who were weeping on each others necks, and taking a hand of each, "My dear Sobieski," cried she, "Why did you withhold the knowledge of

of this acquaintance from me? Had you told me that you knew Mr. Somerset, this happy meeting might have been accomplished sooner."

"Yes;" replied Pembroke, turning to the Countess, and wiping away the tears which were trembling on his cheek; "nothing could have given me pain at this moment, but the conviction that he who was the preserver of my life, and my most generous protector; should, in this country, have endured the most abject distress, rather than let me know, that it was in my power to be grateful."

Thaddeus took out his handkerchief, and for a few minutes concealed his face. The Countess looked on him with tenderness: Believing that he would sooner regain composure were he alone with his friend, she stole unobserved out of the room. Pembroke affectionately resumed; "But, I hope, dear Sobieski, that you will never leave me more. I have an excellent father, who, when made acquainted with my obligations to you and your noble

family, will glory in loving you as a ſon."

Thaddeus having ſubdued '*the woman in his heart;*' raiſed his head with an expreſſion in his eyes, far different from that which had chilled the blood of Pembroke on their firſt encounter.

"Circumſtances," ſaid he, "dear Somerſet, have made me greatly injure you. A ſtrange neglect on your ſide ſince we ſeparated at Villanow, gave the firſt blow to my confidence in your friendſhip. Though I loſt your direct addreſs, I had written to you often, and, yet you perſevered in ſilence. When I came to England, after having witneſſed the deſtruction of all that was dear to me in Poland, and then of Poland itſelf, I wiſhed to give your faithfulneſs another chance; I addreſſed two letters to you; I even delivered the laſt at your door myſelf, and I ſaw you in the window when I ſent it in."

"By all that is ſacred," cried Pembroke vehemently, and amazed, "I never ſaw any letter from you! I wrote you many. I never heard of theſe you mention. Indeed, I ſhould

ſhould even now have been ignorant of the Palatine's, and your mother's cruel fate, had it not been too circumſtantially related in the newſpapers."

"I believe you," returned Thaddeus, drawing an agonizing ſigh, at the dreadful picture which the laſt ſentence had recalled; "I believe you; though at the time I ſpeak of, I thought otherwiſe; for, next day, both my letters were re-incloſed in a blank cover, directed as if by your hand, and brought by a ſervant with a meſſage that there was no anſwer."

"Powers of Heaven!" exclaimed Somerſet, "there muſt be ſome villainy in this! Deareſt Thaddeus!" cried he, breaking off abruptly, and graſping his hand, "I would have flown to you, had it been to meet my death! But why did you not come in yourſelf? Who prevented you? Then no miſtake could have happened. Why did you not come in yourſelf?"

"Becauſe, I was uncertain of your ſentiments: my firſt letter had remained unnoticed; and my heart, dear Somerſet,"

added he, preſſing his hand, "would not ſtoop to ſolicitation."

"Solicitation!" exclaimed Pembroke with warmth, "You have a right to demand my life! But there is ſome raſcally buſineſs in this affair; nothing elſe could have carried it through: if any of my ſervants have dared to open theſe letters—— Merciful Heaven," cried he, interrupting himſelf, "how you muſt have deſpiſed me!"

"I was afflicted," returned Thaddeus, "that the man whom my family had ſo warmly loved, could prove ſo unworthy; and, afterwards, whenever I met you in the ſtreets, which I think was once or twice, I confeſs, to paſs you cut me to the heart."

"And you have met me!" exclaimed Pembroke, "and I not ſee you! I cannot comprehend it."

"Yes," anſwered Thaddeus, "and the firſt time was going into the playhouſe. I believe I called after you."

"It is now ten months ſince?" returned Pembroke; "I remember very well, that

ſomebody called out my name, while I was handing Lady Coningſby and her ſiſter into the door. I looked about, and not ſeeing any one I knew, thought I muſt have been miſtaken. But why, dear Sobieſki, why did you not follow me into the theatre?"

Thaddeus ſhook his head, and ſmiling languidly; "My poverty would not permit me," replied he, "but I waited in the hall till every body had left the houſe, in hopes of intercepting you as you paſſed."

Pembroke ſprung from his chair at theſe laſt words; and, with the moſt vehement voice and action, exclaimed, "I ſee it! That raſcal Loftus, is at the bottom of it all! He followed me into the theatre, he muſt have ſeen you, and his curſed ſelfiſhneſs took fright. Yes, it muſt be him! He would not allow me to return that way; when I ſaid I would, he told me a thouſand lies about the carriages coming round; and, like a fool, I went out by another door."

"Who is Mr. Loftus?" inquired Thaddeus, ſurpriſed at his friend's ſuſpicion; "I do not know ſuch a man."

"What," returned Pembroke, walking about the room in a heat, "don't you remember, that Loftus is the name of the ſcoundrel who perſuaded me to volunteer againſt Poland? to ſcreen his baſeneſs, I have brought all this upon myſelf."

"Now, I recollect it;" replied Thaddeus, "but I never ſaw him."

"Yet, I am not leſs certain that I am right," replied Somerſet; "I will recount to you my reaſons. After I had quitted Villanow, you remember I met him at Dantzic? Before we left that port, he implored, almoſt on his knees, that in pity to his mother and ſiſters, whom he ſupported out of his ſalary, I would refrain from inceníing my parents againſt him, by relating any circumſtance of our viſit to Poland. The man ſhed tears as he ſpoke; and, like a fool, I conſented to keep the ſecret, till the vicar of Somerſet, (a poor ſoul, ill of the dropſy,) dies, and he be in poſſeſſion of the living. When we landed in England," continued Pembroke, caſting down his eyes, "I found that the cauſe of my ſudden recall, was the illneſs of my dear mother.

mother. But heaven denied me the comfort of beholding her again: ſhe had been buried two days before I reached the ſhore." He pauſed for a moment; and then reſumed, "For near a month after my return, I could not quit my room; a fever had ſeized me: but, on my recovery, I immediately wrote, both to you and to the Palatine. I repeated theſe letters at leaſt every ſix weeks during the firſt year of our ſeparation; yet you perſiſted in being ſilent. Hurt as I was at this neglect, I felt that gratitude demanded ſome ſacrifices from pride, and I continued to write, even into the ſpring following. Meanwhile, the papers of the day teemed with Sobieſki's actions, Sobieſki's fame; and, believing that increaſing glory had blotted me out of your memory, I reſolved, henceforth to regard our friendſhip as a dream, and never to ſpeak of it more."

Confounded at this double miſapprehenſion, Thaddeus, with a glowing countenance, expreſſed his regret for having doubted his friend; and, repeating the aſſurance of having been punctual to his

promiſe of correſpondence, even when he deemed him inconſtant; acknowledged, that nothing ſhort of a premeditated ſcheme could have wrought ſuch undeviating miſcarriage.

"Aye;" returned Pembroke, reddening with awakened anger; "I could ſwear that Mr. Loftus has all my letters in his bureau at this moment! No houſe ever gave a man a better opportunity to play the rogue in, than ours. It is a cuſtom with us to lay our letters in a morning on the hall table, whence they are ſent to the office; and, in the ſame way when the poſt arrives, they are ſpread out, for their ſeveral owners to take as they paſs to breakfaſt. Owing to this management, I cannot doubt the means by which Mr. Loftus, under the hope of ſeparating us for ever, has intercepted every letter to you, and every letter from you. I ſuppoſe, the wretch feared that I would repent my engagement, if our correſpondence were allowed. He trembled, leſt the buſineſs ſhould be blown before the vicar died, and he in conſequence, loſe both the expected living, and his preſent

ſituation

ſituation about Lord Arun. A villain! For once he has judged rightly; I will unmaſk him to my father, and ſhew him what it is to purchaſe ſubſiſtence at the expence of honour and juſtice."

Thaddeus, who could not withhold inſtant credence to theſe evidences of chicanery, tried to calm the violence of his friend; who only anſwered, by inſiſting on his immediate return with him to Somerſet caſtle.

"I long to preſent you to my father;" cried Pembroke, "when I tell him who you are; of your kindneſs to me; how rejoiced will he be! How happy, how proud, to have you as his gueſt; to ſhew the warm gratitude of a Briton's heart! Indeed Sobieſki, you will love him; for he is generous and noble, like your ineſtimable grandfather. Beſides," added he, ſmiling with a ſudden recollection, "there is my lovely couſin Mary; who, I verily believe, will actually fly into your arms!"

Thaddeus felt the blood ruſh over his cheeks at this ſpeech of his friend's, and half ſuppreſſing a ſigh, he ſhook his head.

"Don't look so like an infidel," resumed Somerset. "If you have any doubts of possessing her affections, I can put you out of your pain by a single sentence! When Lady Dundas's household, with myself amongst them, (for little did I know that I was joining the cry against my friend!) were asserting the most flagrant instances of your deceit to Euphemia, Mary alone, withstood the whole tide of malice, and compelled me to release you."

"Gracious Providence!" cried Thaddeus, catching Pembroke's hand, and looking eagerly and agitatedly in his face, "Was it you who came to my prison? Was it Miss Beaufort who visited my lodgings?"

"Indeed, it was," returned his friend, "and I blush for myself, that I quitted Newgate without an interview. Had I followed the dictates of common decency, I should have seen you; and then, what pain would have been spared my dear cousin! What a joyful surprize would have awaited myself!"

Thaddeus

Thaddeus could only reply by preſſing his friend's hand. His brain whirled. He could not decide on the nature of his feelings; one moment he would have given worlds to throw himſelf at Miſs Beaufort's feet, and the next, he trembled at the proſpect of meeting her ſo ſoon.

"Dear Sobieſki," cried Pembroke, "how ſtrangely you receive this intelligence! Is it poſſible, that the love of Mary Beaufort can be rejected?"

"No," cried the Count looking up, his fine face flushed with emotion; "I adore Miſs Beaufort. Her virtues poſſeſs my whole heart. But can I forget, that I have only that heart to offer? Can I forget that I am a beggar? That even now, I exiſt on her bounty?" The eyes of Thaddeus, and the ſudden tremor which ſhook his frame, finiſhed this appeal to his fate.

Pembroke felt it enter his ſoul. To hide its effect, he threw himſelf on his friend's breaſt; and exclaimed, "Do not injure me and my father, by theſe

ſentiments! You are come, deareſt Sobieſki, to a ſecond home. Sir Robert Somerſet will conſider himſelf ennobled in ſupplying the place of your lamented grandfather!—and my couſin Mary, as you love her, ſhall bind us ſtill cloſer; you muſt be my relation, as well as my friend!"

Thaddeus replied with animated acknowledgments of Pembroke's affection, —"But," added he, "I muſt not allow the generous ſpirit of my dear Somerſet, to believe, that I can live a dependant on any power but the author of my being. I conſider nothing ſo degrading as an exiſtence waſted in idleneſs; therefore, if Sir Robert Somerſet will aſſiſt me to procure ſome honeſt means of acquiring ſupport, I ſhall thank him from my ſoul. In no other way, my kindeſt friend, can I ever be brought to tax the gratitude of your father."

Pembroke coloured at this, and exclaimed in a voice of diſpleaſure, "Gracious Heaven, Sobieſki, what can you mean? Do you imagine, that ever my father or myſelf

myſelf can forget that you were little leſs than a prince in your own country? That when in that high ſtation, you treated me like a brother? That you preſerved me, even when I lifted my arm againſt your life? Can we be ſuch monſters, as to forget all this? or think that we act juſtly by you, in permitting you to labour for your bread? No, Thaddeus, my very ſoul ſpurns at the idea. Your mother ſheltered me as a ſon; and I inſiſt that you allow my father to perform the ſame part by you! Beſides, you ſhall not be idle; you may have a commiſſion in the army, and I will follow you."

The Count ſqueezed the hand of his friend, and looking gratefully in his face whilſt he ſhook his head, replied, "Had I a hundred tongues, my generous Pembroke, I could not expreſs my ſenſe of your friendſhip; it is indeed a cordial to my heart; it imparts to me an earneſt of happineſs which I thought had fled me for ever: but, it ſhall not allure me from my principles. I am reſolved not to live a life of indolence; and I am reſolved, not

at

at this period, to enter the Britiſh army. No," added he, emotion elevating his tone and manner; "rather would I toil for ſubſiſtence by the ſweat of my brow, than be ſubjected to the neceſſity of acting in concert with thoſe ravagers who deſtroyed my country! I cannot fight by the ſide of the Ruſſians! I cannot inliſt under their allies! I will not be led out to devaſtation! Mine was, and ever ſhall remain, a defenſive ſword: and, ſhould danger threaten England, I ſhall be as ready to withſtand her enemies, as I ardently, though ineffectually, oppoſed thoſe of unhappy Poland."

Pembroke recognized the high-ſouled Thaddeus of Warſaw, in this lofty burſt of enthuſiaſm: aware that his father's munificence, and manner of conferring eſteem and obligations, would go farther towards removing theſe ſcruples of delicacy than all his arguments; he did not attempt to combat a reſolution which he knew he could not ſubdue; but tried to prevail on him, to become his gueſt, till ſomething could be arranged to ſuit his wiſhes.

Thaddeus

Thaddeus conſented to accompany Somerſet to the caſtle the day after the one in which Sir Robert ſhould be appriſed of his coming. Pembroke perceived that the morning had ſurprized them; and ſhaking his friend warmly by the hand, he bade him farewel; then haſtening down the hill, he arrived at the lodge, juſt as the ſervants were opening the ſhutters.

Having given orders to the groom whom he met in the paſſage, he wrote a ſlight apology to Shafto for his abrupt departure; and, mounting his horſe, gallopped full of delight towards Somerſet Caſtle.

CHAP. III.

NEXT morning, when the Counteſs and Thaddeus were ſeated at breakfaſt, her ladyſhip expreſſed ſurprize and pleaſure at the ſcene which ſhe had witneſſed the preceding night, at the ſame time intimating ſome mortification on the diſcovery, that he had witheld any of his confidence from her. Sobieſki ſoon obtained her ladyſhip's pardon, by relating the manner of his firſt meeting with Mr. Somerſet, four years ago at the battle of Zielime, and the conſequent events of that momentous period.

Lady Tinemouth wept over the diſtreſſful fate that marked the reſidue of his narrative, with a tenderneſs which endeared her to his ſoul. But when, in compliance with his enquiries, ſhe informed him how ſhe came to be at Harrowby Abbey when he ſuppoſed her on the Wolds; it was his turn to feel pity; and

to

to ſhrink from himſelf, that he had drawn exiſtence from the ſame ſource with Lord Harwold.

" Indeed," added the Counteſs, " you muſt have had a moſt tedious journey from Harwold Park to Harrowby; and nothing but my pleaſure could exceed my aſtoniſhment, when I met you laſt night on the hill."

Thaddeus declared that travelling a few miles farther than he had intended, was no fatigue to him; yet had it been otherwiſe, the happineſs he then enjoyed would have acted as a panacea for worſe ills, could he have ſeen her ladyſhip looking as well as when ſhe left London.

Lady Tinemouth ſmiled. " You are very right, Sobieſki; I am worſe than when I was in town. My ſolitary journey to Harwold haraſſed me much; and when my ſon ſent me orders to leave it, becauſe his father wanted the place for the autumnal months, I was labouring under a ſevere cold caught in travelling. Nevertheleſs, I obeyed him; and, heart-broken and in pain, I arrived here laſt week.

How

How kind you were to follow me. Who informed you of the place of my deſtination? Hardly any of Lady Sophia's houſhold?"

"No," returned Thaddeus; "I luckily had the precaution to inquire at the inn where the coach ſtopped, what part of Lord Tinemouth's family were at the Park; and when I heard that the Earl himſelf was there, my next queſtion was, where then is the Counteſs? The landlord very civilly told me of your having had a carriage from his houſe a day or two before, to carry you to one of his lordſhip's ſeats, within a few miles of Somerſet Caſtle. Hence, from what I had heard your ladyſhip ſay of the ſituation of Harrowby, I judged it muſt be the abbey; and ſo I ſought you at a venture."

"And a happy iſſue I hope will ariſe from your wanderings!" returned her ladyſhip, "This rencontre with ſo old a friend as Mr. Somerſet, is a pleaſing omen. For my part, I was ignorant of the arrival of the family at the caſtle, till yeſterday morning, when I ſent off a meſſenger to appriſe

appriſe my dear Miſs Beaufort, that I am in her neighbourhood. To my great diſſatisfaction, Lady Shafto found me out immediately; and when, in compliance with her teizing invitation, I walked down to ſit an hour with her laſt night, little did I expect that I ſhould meet the amiable couſin of our ſweet friend. So delightful an accident has amply repaid me for the pain I felt in ſeeing Miſs Dundas in her ladyſhip's houſe: an inſolent and reproachful letter which ſhe wrote to me on your account, has rendered her an object of my moſt decided diſlike.

Thaddeus ſmiled and bowed. "Since, my dear Lady Tinemouth, her groundleſs malice, and Miſs Euphemia's folly, have failed in eſtranging either your confidence or the eſteem of Miſs Beaufort from me, I deſpiſe and pardon them both. Perhaps I ought to pity them, for is it not a difficult ordeal, to paſs through the enchantments of wealth and adulation, and emerge as pure as when we entered them? Unclouded fortune, is indeed a trial of ſpirits; and how brightly does Miſs Beaufort riſe

riſe from the blaze! Surrounded by ſplendour, homage, and indulgence, ſhe is yet all nature, gentleneſs, and virtue!"

The Counteſs, who wiſhed to appear cheerful, rallied him on the warmth of his expreſſions; then riſing from her ſeat, ſhe left him to his meditations, and retired to dreſs.

The family at Somerſet had juſt drawn round the breakfaſt table, when Pembroke arrived. During the repaſt, they expreſſed their ſurpriſe at the ſuddenneſs of his return. Mary, after repeating the contents of the note which ſhe had received the preceding day from Lady Tinemouth, requeſted that her couſin would be kind enough to drive her in his curricle that morning to Harrowby.

"I will, with pleaſure," anſwered he: "I have ſeen her ladyſhip, and even ſupped with her laſt night."

"How came that?" aſked Mrs. Dorothy.

"I ſhall explain it to my father, whenever he will honour me with an audience," returned

returned he addreſſing the baronet, with all the joy of his heart looking out at his eyes; "will you indulge me, my dear Sir, by half an hour's attention, any time before noon?"

"Certainly," replied Sir Robert; "at preſent I am going into my ſtudy, where I muſt ſettle my ſteward's books; but the moment I have finiſhed, I will ſend for you."

Mrs. Dorothy walked out after her brother, to attend to her aviary; and Mary remaining alone with her couſin, made ſome enquiries about the Counteſs's reaſons for coming to the abbey.

"I know nothing about them," replied he, gayly, "for ſhe went to bed almoſt the inſtant I entered her houſe. Too good to remain where her company was not wanted, ſhe left me to enjoy a moſt delightful *tête-à-tête* with a dear friend, from whom I parted four years ago. In ſhort, we ſat up the whole night together, talking over paſt ſcenes, and preſent ones too, for I aſſure you, you were not forgotten."

"Me!

"Me! What had I to do with it?" replied Mary, ſmiling, "I cannot recollect any friend of yours that you have not ſeen theſe four years."

"Well, that is ſtrange!" anſwered Pembroke, "he remembers you perfectly; but true to your ſex, you affirm what you pleaſe, though I know that there is not a man in the world whom you prefer before him."

Mary ſhook her head, laughed, and ſighed, and extricating her hand from his, threatened to leave him if he would not be ſerious.

"I am ſerious," cried he, catching her arm, and pulling her back to her ſeat; "Would you have me ſwear that I have ſeen him you moſt wiſh to ſee?"

Mary regarded the expreſſion of his countenance with a thrill, which vaniſhed as ſoon as felt; and reſuming her chair, quietly, ſaid, "You can have ſeen no man that is of conſequence to me; ſo, whoever your friend may be, I have only to congratulate you on a meeting which affords you ſuch extreme delight."

Pembroke

Pembroke burſt into a laugh at her compoſure. "So cold, Mary!" cried he, "So cautious! Yet I verily believe you would anſwer my tranſports, did I tell you who he is. However, you are ſuch a ſceptic, that I won't hint even one of the many fine things he ſaid about you."

Mary ſmiled incredulouſly.

"I could beat you couſin," exclaimed he, "for this oblique way of ſaying that I am telling lies! But I will have my revenge on your curioſity; for, on my honour, I declare," added he emphatically, "that laſt night, I met with a friend at Lady Tinemouth's, who, four years ago ſaved my life; who entertained me ſeveral weeks in his houſe; and, who has ſeen, and adores you! 'Tis true, on my hopes of heaven; and I have promiſed, that you will repay theſe heavy obligations, by marrying him. What do you ſay to this, my ſweet Mary?"

Miſs Beaufort looked anxious at the ſerious and energetic manner in which theſe rapid aſſeverations were uttered: even the ſportive kiſs that ended the queſtion,

ſtion, did not diſpel the gravity with which ſhe prepared to reply.

Pembroke perceiving her intent, prevented her by exclaiming, "Ceaſe, Mary, ceaſe! I ſee you are preparing a falſe ſtatement. Let truth prevail, and you will not deny, that I am ſuing for a plighted faith? You will not deny who it was that ſubdued your judgment, to any indulgence? You cannot conceal from me, that the wanderer Conſtantine poſſeſſes your affections?"

Mary reddened with pain and diſpleaſure; and, riſing from her ſeat, "I did not expect this cruel, this ungenerous ſpeech from you, Pembroke!" cried ſhe, averting her brimming eyes; "What have I done to deſerve ſo rude, ſo unfeeling a reproach?"

Pembroke threw his arm round her waiſt. "Come," ſaid he in a tender voice, "don't be tragical. I never meant to reproach you child: I dare ſay, if you gave your heart, it was only in return for his. I know you are a grateful girl; and, I verily believe, you won't find much difference

ference between my friend the young Count Sobieſki, and the forlorn Conſtantine."

A ſuſpicion of the truth flaſhed acroſs Miſs Beaufort's mind: unable to ſpeak, ſhe caught hold of her couſin's hands, and looking eagerly in his face, her eyes declared the queſtion ſhe would have aſked.

Pembroke laughed triumphantly; but a ſervant entering to tell him that Sir Robert was ready, he ſtrained her to his breaſt, and exclaimed, "Now I am revenged! Farewell! I leave you to all the pangs of doubt and curioſity!" He then flew out of the room, with an arch glance at her diſtreſſed countenance, and hurried up ſtairs.

Mary claſped her trembling hands together as the door cloſed on Pembroke. "O, Gracious Providence!" cried ſhe, "What am I to underſtand by this myſtery, this joy of my couſin's? Can it be poſſible, that the illuſtrious Sobieſki, and my contemned Conſtantine, are the ſame?" A burning bluſh over-ſpread her face and

 boſom

boſom at the expreſſion *my* which had eſcaped her lips.

Whilſt the graces, the ſweetneſs, the dignity of Thaddeus, captivated her notice; his ſufferings, his virtues, and the myſterious intereſt which involved his hiſtory, had fixed her attention, and awakened her eſteem. From theſe grounds, the ſtep is ſhort to love. 'When the ſoul is conquered, the heart ſurrenders at diſcretion.' But Mary knew not that ſhe had advanced farther than what rendered retreat poſſible, till the laſt ſcene at Dundas-houſe, by forcing her to defend Conſtantine againſt the charge of loving her, compelled her to feel how much ſhe wiſhed that the truth were otherwiſe.

Poor and lowly as he ſeemed, ſhe found that her whole heart and life were wrapped in his remembrance; that his worſhipped idea, was her moſt precious ſolace, her property, her dear treaſure, on which ſhe banqueted in ſecret. It was the companion of her walks, the monitor of her actions. Whenever ſhe planned, whenever

ever ſhe executed, ſhe aſked herſelf, How would Conſtantine conſider this? and accordingly, did ſhe approve or condemn her conduct.

Though ſeparated far from this idol of her memory, thus was the impreſſion which he had ſtamped on her heart, ever preſent. The ſhade of Laura viſited the ſolitude of Vancluſe; the image of Conſtantine haunted the walks of Somerſet. The lovelineſs of nature; its leafy groves, and verdant meadows; its blooming mornings, and luxuriant ſunſets; the romantic ſhadows of twilight, or the ſoft glories of the moon and ſtars; all, as they preſſed beauty and ſentiment upon her heart, awoke it to the remembrance of Conſtantine: ſhe ſaw his image in every thing, ſhe felt his ſoul in all. Subtle, and undefinable, is that ethereal chord, which unites our tendereſt thoughts with their chain of aſſociation!

Before this converſation, in which Pembroke had mentioned the name of Conſtantine with ſuch badinage and ambiguity, he had never heard him ſpoken

of by Mary or his aunt, without declaring a diſpleaſure nearly amounting to anger. Hence, when he now ſo ſtrangely altered his tone, Miſs Beaufort could not eſcape retaining the only concluſion which could be drawn; that he had ſeen in the perſon of him ſhe moſt valued, ſome one whom he loved. Prior to this time, ſhe had more than once ſuſpected from the opinions which Somerſet occaſionally repeated reſpecting the affairs of Poland, that he could only have acquired ſo nice a knowledge of its events, by having viſited the country itſelf. She propoſed her ſuſpicion to Mr. Loftus: he denied the fact; and ſhe thought no more on the ſubject, till the preſent ambiguous hints of her couſin, conjured up theſe doubts anew; and, led her to ſuppoſe, that if Pembroke had not diſobeyed his father ſo far as to go to Warſaw, he had at leaſt met with the Count Sobieſki in ſome other realm. The poſſibility that this young hero, of whom fame had ſpoken ſo loudly, might be the myſterious Conſtantine, bewildered and delighted her. The more ſhe compared what ſhe had heard

heard of the one, with what she had witnessed in the other, the more was she reconciled to the probability of so wild a hope. Besides, she could not for a moment believe that her cousin would so cruelly sport with her delicacy and feelings, as to awaken expectations which he could not fulfil.

Agitated by a suspence which bordered on agony, with a beating heart she heard his quick step descending the stairs. The door opened, and Pembroke, flying into the room, caught up his hat: as he was darting away again, Mary, unable to restrain her impatience, with an imploring voice ejaculated his name. He turned round, and displayed to her amazed sight, a countenance in which no vestage of its former animation could be traced; his cheek was flushed; and his eyes full of distraction, shot a wild fire, that immediately struck to her heart. Unconscious what she did, she ran up to him; but Pembroke pushing her back, with parched lips, and in a hurried voice, exclaimed, "Don't ask me any questions,

Mary, if you would not drive me to madneſs."

"O Heaven!" cried ſhe, catching his arm, and clinging to him while the velocity of his motion dragged her into the hall; "tell me! Has any thing happened to my guardian? to your friend? to Conſtantine?"

"No;" replied he, looking at her with a face full of deſperation; "but my father commands me to treat him like a villain."

Mary could hardly credit her ſenſes, at this confirmation that Conſtantine and Sobieſki were one: turning giddy with the tumultuous delight which ruſhed over her ſoul, ſhe ſtaggered back a few paces, and, leaning againſt the now open door, tried to recover breath to regain the room ſhe had left.

Pembroke having eſcaped from her graſp, ran furiouſly down the hill, mounted his horſe, and, forbidding any groom to attend him, galloped towards the high-road with the impetuoſity of a madman. All the powers of his ſoul were

in

in arms. He felt himſelf wounded, diſhonoured, ſtigmatiſed with ingratitude, and every baſeneſs, which can degrade the mind of man.

Sir Robert Somerſet had founded a hatred of the Poles and Hungarians, on the recollection of an injury which he had received in early youth from ſome of thoſe people. In this inſtance his diſlike was implacable; and when his ſon ſet out for the continent, he poſitively forbade him to enter either Poland or Hungary. Nevertheleſs, when Pembroke joined the Baronet in his library, he did it with confidence. With a bounding heart and animated countenance, he recapitulated how he had been wrought up by the Ruſſian noblemen, to take up arms in their cauſe and march into Poland. At theſe laſt words, the brow of his father contracted.

Pembroke, who expected ſome marks of diſpleaſure, haſtened to obliterate his diſobedience, by narrating the event which introduced, not only the young Count Sobieſki to his ſuccour, but the

conſequent friendſhip of the whole of that princely family.

Sir Robert made no other reply to this, than by a deeper frown; and, when Pembroke, with all the ardour of youth, attempted to deſcribe the calamitous death of the Palatine, the horrors that attended the laſt hours of the Counteſs, and the ſucceeding miſery of Thaddeus, who was now in England, no language can paint the rage which burſt at once from the Baronet. He ſtamped on the ground, he covered his face with his clenched hands; then turning on his ſon with the moſt tremendous fury, he exclaimed, "Pembroke! You have outraged my commands! And never will I pardon you, if this young man be ever brought into my ſight."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Pembroke, thunder-ſtruck at a violence, which he almoſt wiſhed might proceed from any cauſe but intention; "Surely ſomething has agitated my father! What has diſcompoſed you, Sir?"

Sir

Sir Robert ſhook his head, whilſt his teeth appeared to grind againſt each other. "Don't miſtake me." replied he in a firm voice, "I am perfectly in my ſenſes. It depends on *you* that I ſhall continue ſo. You know my oath againſt theſe accurſed Polanders; and, I repeat again, if you ever bring that young man into my ſight, you ſhall never ſee *me* more."

A cold dew overſpread the body of Pembroke. He would have caught hold of his father's hand, but he held it back. "O, Sir!" ſaid he, "You ſurely cannot intend that I ſhall treat with ingratitude the man who ſaved my life?"

Sir Robert did not vouchſafe him an an anſwer, but continued walking up and down the room, till his agitation ſeeming to encreaſe at every ſtep, he opened the door of an interior apartment, and retired, bidding his ſon remain.

The horror-ſtruck Pembroke waited for near a quarter of an hour before his father re-entered. When he did appear, the deep gloom of his eye gave no encouragement to his ſon, who, hanging down his head,

recoiled from ſpeaking firſt. Sir Robert approached with a compoſed but ſevere countenance, and ſaid, "I have been ſeeking every palliation that your conduct will admit, but I can find none. Before you quitted England, you knew well my abhorrence of the Poliſh nation. One of that country, many years ago, wounded my happineſs in a way that I ſhall never recover. From that hour, I took an oath, never to enter its borders; and never to ſuffer one of its people to come within my doors. Raſh, diſobedient boy! You know my diſpoſition, and you have ſeen the emotion with which this dilemma has ſhaken my ſoul! But, be it on your own head: you have incurred obligations which I cannot repay. I will not perjure myſelf to defray a debt contracted againſt my poſitive and declared principles. I never will ſee this Polander you ſpeak of; and, it is my expreſs command, on pain of my eternal malediction, that you break with him entirely."

Pembroke, with a deep groan, fell into a ſeat. Sir Robert proceeded.

"I pity

"I pity your diſtreſs, Pembroke, but my reſolution cannot be ſhaken. Oaths are not to be broken with impunity. You muſt either reſign him, or reſign me. We may compromiſe your debt of gratitude; I will give you deeds to put your friend in poſſeſſion of five hundred a year for life, for ever; but, from the hour in which you tell him ſo, you muſt never ſee him more."

Sir Robert was preparing to quit the room; when Pembroke, ſtarting from his chair, threw himſelf in agony on his knees, and catching by the ſkirt of his coat, implored him, for God's ſake, to recall his words; to remember, that he was affixing everlaſting diſhonour on his ſon! "Remember, dear Sir!" cried he, holding his ſtruggling hand, "that the man to whom you offer money as a compenſation for inſult, is of a nature too noble to receive it. He will reject it, and ſpurn me; and I ſhall feel that I deſerve his ſcorn. For mercy's ſake, ſpare me the agony of harrowing up the heart of my preſerver; of meeting reproach from his eyes!"

"Leave me!" cried the Baronet, breaking from him; "I repeat, unleſs you wiſh to incur my curſe, do as I have commanded."

Thus outraged, thus agonized, Pembroke had appeared before the eyes of his couſin Mary, more like a diſtracted creature, than a man poſſeſſed of his ſenſes. Shortly after his abrupt departure, her apprehenſion was petrified to a dreadful certainty of ſome cruel ruin to her hopes, by an order which ſhe received in the hand-writing of her uncle, commanding her not to attempt viſiting Lady Tinemouth, whilſt the Count Sobieſki continued to be her gueſt.

Hardly knowing whither he went, Pembroke did not arrive at the ruined aiſle which leads up to the habitable part of the Abbey, till near three o'clock. He inquired of the ſervant who took his horſe, whether the Counteſs and Mr. Conſtantine were at home. The man replied in the affirmative; but added with a ſaddened countenance, that he feared neither of them could be ſeen.

"For

"For what reaſon?" demanded Somerſet.

"Alas! Sir," replied the ſervant, "this day at noon, whilſt my lady was dreſſing, ſhe was ſeized with a violent fit of coughing, which ended in the rupture of a blood veſſel. It continued to flow ſo long, that Mr. Conſtantine told the apothecary whom he had ſummoned, to ſend for Dr. Cavendiſh, a phyſician of his acquaintance, who is now at Stamford. The Doctor is not yet arrived, and Mr. Conſtantine won't leave my lady."

Though Mr. Somerſet was truly concerned at the illneſs of the Counteſs, the reſpite it afforded him from immediately declaring the ungrateful meſſage of Sir Robert, gave him no inconſiderable degree of eaſe. Some little relieved by the hope of being for one day ſpared the anguiſh of diſplaying his father in a diſgraceful light, he entered the Abbey; and commiſſioned a maid-ſervant to inform Thaddeus that he was below.

In a few minutes the girl returned with the following lines ſcrawled on a piece of paper.

"I am grieved, that I cannot ſee my dear Somerſet to-day; and more grieved for the cauſe: I fear my revered friend is on her death-bed. I have ſent for Dr. Cavendiſh, who is now at Stamford; doubtleſs you know that he is a man of firſt rate abilities: if human ſkill could preſerve her, I might yet have hopes; but her diſorder is a conſumption, and its ſtroke is ſure. I am now ſitting by her bed-ſide, and writing what ſhe dictates, to her huſband, her ſon, and her daughter: painful, you may believe is the taſk! I cannot, my dear Somerſet, add more, than my hope of ſeeing you ſoon; and that you will join in prayers to heaven for the reſtoration of my ineſtimable friend, with your faithful

"SOBIESKI."

"Alas! unhappy, perſecuted Sobieſki!" thought Pembroke, as he cloſed the paper; "To what art thou doomed! Some friends

are

are torn from thee by death; others, defert thee in the hour of trouble!"

He took out his pencil, to anſwer this diſtreſſing epiſtle, but he ſtopped at the firſt word; he durſt not write that his father would fulfil any one of thoſe engagements which he had ſo largely promiſed; and, throwing away the pencil and the paper, he left a verbal declaration of his ſorrow at what had happened, and an aſſurance of calling next day. Turning his back on a houſe which he had left in the morning with ſuch animating hopes, he re-mounted his horſe, and, melancholy and ſlow, rode about the country till evening; ſo unwilling was he to return to that home, which now threatened him with the frowns of his father, the tears of Mary Beaufort, and the miſerable reflections of his own wretched heart.

CHAP. IV.

DOCTOR Cavendiſh not having quitted his friend at Stamford, ſet off for Harrowby the inſtant Mr. Conſtantine's meſſenger arrived; and, before midnight alighted at the Abbey.

When he entered Lady Tinemouth's chamber, he found her ladyſhip ſupported in the arms of Thaddeus, and ſtruggling with a ſecond rupture of her lungs, which ſeemed to threaten immediate diſſolution. As he approached the bed, Thaddeus turned his eyes on him with an expreſſion that powerfully told his fears. Dr. Cavendiſh ſilently ſqueezed his hand; then taking from his pocket ſome ſtyptic drops which he had brought on purpoſe, he made the Counteſs ſwallow them, and ſoon ſaw that they ſucceeded in ſtopping the blood.

Thaddeus and his friend remained by the ſide of the ſuffering Lady Tinemouth till

till towards ten in the morning, when ſhe ſunk into a gentle ſleep. Complete ſtillneſs being neceſſary to continue this repoſe, the Doctor propoſed leaving a maid to watch by her ladyſhip; and, drawing the Count out of the room, deſcended the ſtairs.

Mr. Somerſet, who had been arrived half an hour, met them in the breakfaſt-parlour. After a few kind words exchanged between the parties, they all ſat down with dejected countenances to their melancholy meal. Thaddeus was too much abſorbed in the ſcene he had left, to ſwallow any thing but a diſh of coffee.

"Do you think Lady Tinemouth is in imminent danger?" inquired Pembroke of the Doctor.

Dr. Cavendiſh ſighed, and turning to Thaddeus, directed to him the anſwer which his friend's queſtion had demanded. "I am afraid, my dear Mr. Conſtantine," ſaid he, in a reluctant voice; "that you are to ſuſtain a new trial! I really fear, that

that her ladyſhip cannot live eight-and-forty hours."

Thaddeus threw down his eyes and ſhuddered, but made no reply. Further remarks were prevented by a meſſenger from the Counteſs, who deſired Mr. Conſtantine's immediate attendance at her ladyſhip's bed-ſide. He obeyed. In half an hour he returned with the tears yet wet on his cheek.

"Dear Thaddeus!" cried Pembroke, riſing and taking his hand, "I truſt the Counteſs is not worſe? This emotion of yours is too diſtreſſing: it afflicts my very heart." Pembroke felt that it rent it; for he could not help internally acknowledging, that when Sobieſki ſhould cloſe the eyes of Lady Tinemouth, he would be paying the laſt ſad office to his laſt friend. That dear diſtinction he durſt no longer arrogate to himſelf. Denied the fulfilment of its duties, he felt, that to retain the title, would be an aſſumption without a right.

Thaddeus drew his hand over his again brimming eyes; "The Counteſs herſelf," ſaid

ſaid he, "feels the truth of what Dr. Cavendiſh told us. She ſent for me, to beg as I loved her, or would wiſh to ſee her die in peace, to deviſe ſome means of bringing her daughter to the Abbey to night. As for Lord Harwold, ſhe ſays, his behaviour ſince he arrived at manhood, has been of a nature ſo cruel and unnatural, that ſhe would not draw on herſelf the miſery, or he the added guilt, of a refuſal: for Lady Albina, who has been quieſcent in all their barbarities, ſhe truſts, ſhe might be prevailed on to ſeek a laſt embrace from a dying parent. It is this requeſt," added Thaddeus, "that has thus agitated me. When ſhe pictured to me, with all the fervour of a mother, her doating fondneſs for this daughter, (on whom, whenever ſhe did venture to hope, all her fairy dreams had reſted;) when ſhe wrung my hands, and beſeeched me, as if I had been the ſole diſpoſer of her fate, to let her ſee her child before ſhe died; I could only promiſe every exertion to effect it; and, with an aching heart, I came to conſult you."

Dr.

Dr. Cavendiſh was opening his lips to ſpeak; but Somerſet, in his eagerneſs to relieve his friend, did not perceive it, and immediately anſwered: "I will undertake this very hour what you have promiſed. I know that Lord Tinemouth's family are now at the Wold. It is only thirty miles diſtant. I will ſend a ſervant, to have relays of horſes ready. My curricle, which is at the door, will be more convenient than a chaiſe; and I will engage to be back before to-morrow morning. Write a letter, Thaddeus," continued he, "to Lady Albina; tell her of her mother's ſituation; and, though I have never ſeen her ladyſhip, I will give it into her own hand, and carry her off directly, even were it in the face of her raſcally father."

The pale cheeks of Thaddeus were fluſhed with a momentary hectic; turning to Dr. Cavendiſh, he begged him to write, whilſt he walked out with his friend to order the carriage. Pembroke was thanked for his zeal, but it was not by words; they are too weak vehicles to convey ſtrong feelings; Thaddeus preſſed his hand,

hand, and accompanied the action with a look that spoke volumes. The warm heart of Pembroke, expanding under the animated gratitude of his friend: He sprung into his seat, and forgot till he had lost sight of Harrowby Hill, how soon he must appear to that friend, as the most ungrateful of men.

It was near four in the afternoon, before Mr. Somerset left his curricle at the little inn which skirts the village of Harthorpe. The paling belonging to Lord Tinemouth's park, was only a few yards distant; but, fearful of being observed, Pembroke sought a more obscure part; and, scaling a wall covered by the branches of high trees, he found a way to the house through an almost impassible thicket.

He watched two hours for the appearance of Lady Albina, (whose youth and elegance he thought would unequivocally distinguish her from the rest of the Earl's household,) but in vain. Desponding of success, he was preparing to change his station, when he heard a sound among the withered leaves, and the next moment, a beautiful young creature passed the bush behind which he

was

was concealed. The fine ſymmetry of her profile, aſſured him that ſhe muſt be the daughter of Lady Tinemouth. She ſtooped to gather a china aſter: Pembroke, knowing that no time ought to be loſt, gently emerged from his receſs; but not ſo ſtilly as to eſcape the ear of Lady Albina, who inſtantly looking round, ſcreamed, and would have fled, had he not thrown himſelf before her, and exclaimed, "Stay, Lady Albina! For Heaven's ſake, ſtay! I come from your mother!"

Her ladyſhip gazed fearfully in his face, and tried to releaſe her hand which he had ſeized to prevent her flight.

"Do not be alarmed;" continued he, "no harm is intended you. I am the ſon of Sir Robert Somerſet, and the friend of your mother, who is now on the point of death. She implores to ſee you this night, (for ſhe has hardly an hour to live,) to hear from your own lips, that you do not hate her."

Lady Albina, now wholly given up to his relation, trembled dreadfully; and, with faded cheeks, and quivering lips, replied,

"Hate my mother! O, no! I have ever dearly loved her!"

A flood of tears prevented her ſpeaking further; and Pembroke perceiving that he had gained her confidence, put the doctor's letter into her hand. The gentle heart of Lady Albina bled at every word which her almoſt blinded eyes read over; turning to Pembroke, who ſtood contemplating her lovely countenance with the deepeſt intereſt, ſhe ſaid, "Pray, Mr. Somerſet, take me immediately to my mother. If ſhe were to die before I can arrive, I ſhall be made miſerable for life. Alas! alas! I have never been allowed to behold her? Never been allowed to viſit London, becauſe my father knew that I believed my poor mother innocent, and would have ſeen her, if it were poſſible;"

Lady Albina wept violently as ſhe ſpoke, and giving her hand to Pembroke, added, timidly looking round to the houſe, "You muſt take me now. We muſt haſten away, in caſe we ſhould be ſurpriſed. If Lady Sophia were to know that I have been

been ſpeaking with any body out of the family, I ſhould be locked up for months."

Pembroke did not require a ſecond command from his beautiful charge, but conducting her through the unfrequented paths by which he had entered, ſoon ſeated her in his curricle; he ſheltered her delicate form with his great coat, and tied down her ſtraw hat with his cambric handkerchief; then whipping his horſes, ſet off on full gallop, towards the melancholy goal of his enterprize.

The tender Lady Albina, whoſe ingenuous mind had ever been proof againſt the malicious inſinuations of Lady Sophia to the prejudice of Lady Tinemouth, ſat by the ſide of Mr. Somerſet, ſometimes mute with ſorrow; ſometimes, lamenting, with all the artleſs eloquence of nature, the injuries of her dying parent, and her own unhappineſs, in having been ſo long witheld from paying duty, where ſhe owed ſo much affection.

Whilſt theſe two anxious travellers were purſuing their ſad journey, the inhabitants of

of the abbey were diſtracted with apprehenſion that the Counteſs would expire before their arrival. Ever ſince Lady Tinemouth had been informed that Mr. Somerſet was gone to the Wold, hope and fear agitated her almoſt to ſuffocation; at length, wearied out with ſolicitude and expectation, ſhe turned her dim eyes upon upon Thaddeus, and forcing a ſmile, ſaid, in a languid voice, "My dear friend, it muſt be near midnight. I ſhall never ſee the morning; I ſhall never in this world ſee my child. I pray you, thank Mr. Somerſet for all the trouble I have occaſioned; and my daughter, my Albina!" added her ladyſhip, hardly able to articulate. "Oh! Father of mercies!" cried ſhe, holding up her claſped hands, "pour all thy bleſſings on her head, ſhe has never wilfully given this broken heart a pang!"

The Counteſs had hardly ended ſpeaking, when Thaddeus heard a buſtle on the ſtairs; ſuſpecting that it might be the arrival of his friend, he made a ſign to Dr. Cavendiſh to go and enquire. His

heart beat violently, whilſt he kept his eye fixed on the door, and held the fainting pulſe of Lady Tinemouth in his hand. The doctor re-entered, and, in a low voice, whiſpered, "Lady Albina is here."

The words acted like magic on the fading ſenſes of the Counteſs; with preternatural ſtrength ſhe ſtarted from her pillow, and catching hold of Sobieſki's arm with both hers, cried, "O! give her to me, whilſt I have life!"

Lady Albina appeared, led in by Pembroke, but inſtantly quitting his hand, with an agonizing ſhriek ſhe ruſhed towards the bed, and flung herſelf into the extended arms of her mother. Thoſe arms cloſed on her, and the head of the Counteſs reſted on her boſom.

Dr. Cavendiſh ſoon perceived, by the ſtruggles of the young lady, that ſhe was in convulſions; taking her off the bed, he conſigned her to Pembroke and Thaddeus, who carried her into another apartment: he remained to aſſiſt the Counteſs.

Albina

Albina was removed; but her eyes of the amiable and injured mother, were never again uncloſed: ſhe had breathed her laſt ſigh in grateful exſtacy on the boſom of her daughter; and Heaven had taken her ſpotleſs ſoul to itſelf.

Being convinced that the Counteſs was indeed no more, the good doctor left her remains in charge with the women, and repairing to the adjoining room, found Lady Albina yet ſenſeleſs, in the arms of his two friends. She was laid on a ſofa, and Cavendiſh was pouring ſome drops into her mouth, when he deſcried Thaddeus gliding ſoftly out of the room: deſirous to ſpare him the ſhock of ſuddenly ſeeing the corpſe of one whom he loved ſo dearly, he ſaid, "Stop, Mr. Conſtantine! I conjure you, do not go into the Counteſs's room!"

The eyes of Thaddeus turned with quickneſs on the diſtreſſed face of the phyſician; one glance explained what the doctor durſt not ſpeak; and haſtily ſaying, "I ſhall obey you." He hurried from the chamber.

In the Count's rapid deſcent from Lady Albina's room, to the breakfaſt-parlour, he too plainly perceived, by the tears of the ſervants, that he had now no ſorrows to regret but his own. He darted from the clamorous laments of theſe honeſt people into the parlour, and ſhutting the door, threw himſelf down on a ſofa; but reſt induced thought, and thought harrowed up his ſoul. He ſtarted from his poſition; he paced the room in a paroxyſm of anguiſh; he would have given worlds for one tear to relieve his oppreſſed heart. Ready to ſuffocate, he threw open a window, and leaned out. Not a ſtar appeared to light the ſky; the wind blew freſhly; and, with parched lips, he inhaled it, as the reviving breath of heaven.

He was ſitting on the window-ſeat, with his head leaning againſt the caſement, when Pembroke entered unobſerved: walking up to him, he laid his hand upon his arm, and ejaculated, in a tremulous voice, "Thaddeus, dear Thaddeus!"

Thaddeus

Thaddeus roſe at the well-known ſounds; they reminded him that he was not yet alone in the world; and throwing himſelf upon the boſom of Mr. Somerſet, he exclaimed, "Heaven has ſtill reſerved thee, my dear Pembroke, to be my comforter! In thy friendſhip," added he, wiping away the tears which relieved his burſting heart; "I ſhall find an affection ſimilar with thoſe which are gone forever: my friend, my brother! you are the laſt cord that binds me to the world."

Pembroke received the embrace of his friend; he felt his tears upon his cheek; but he could neither return the one, nor ſympathize with the other. The conviction, that he was ſoon to ſever that cord which bound them to each other; that he was to cut aſunder that knot which ought to have united them for ever; that he was to deprive the man who had preſerved his life, of the only ſtay of his exiſtence, and abandon him at once to deſpair! all theſe ideas ſtruck to his ſoul; and, graſping the hand of his friend, he gazed at his averted and dejected features, with a look of deſ-

perate horror. "Sobieſki," cried he, "whatever may happen, never forget, that I ſwear, I love you dearer than my life! And, when I am forced to abandon my friend, I ſhall not be long of abandoning what will then be worthleſs to me."

Not perceiving the phrenzy of eye which accompanied this energetic declaration, Thaddeus gave no other meaning to the words, than believing it to be the moſt expreſſive aſſurance of affection that the forceful nature of his friend could deviſe.

The entrance of Dr. Cavendiſh diſturbed the two young men, to whom he immediately communicated the encreaſed indiſpoſition of Lady Albina.

"The ſhock," ſaid he, "which ſhe has received from the meeting, and death of her mother, has ſo materially ſhaken her delicate frame, that I have ordered her to bed, and adminiſtered an opiate, which I hope will procure ſome repoſe: and you, my dear Sir," added he, addreſſing the Count, "you had better ſeek a little reſt! The ſtouteſt conſtitution might ſink under what

what you have lately endured. Pray, allow Mr. Somerſet and myſelf to prevail on you, on our accounts, if not on your own, to retire for half an hour!"

Thaddeus, in diſregard of his perſonal comfort, never infringed on that of others; he felt that he could not ſleep: but he knew it would gratify his benevolent friends, to ſuppoſe that he did; and accordingly, without oppoſition, he went to a room, and throwing himſelf on the bed, lay for near an hour, ruminating on what had paſſed. There is an omnipreſence in thought, or a velocity producing nearly the ſame effect, which brings within the ſhort ſpace of a few minutes, the images of many foregoing years. In almoſt the ſame moment, Thaddeus pondered on his ſtrange meeting with the Counteſs, her melancholy ſtory, her forlorn death-bed, the fatal ſecret that her vile huſband and ſon were his father and brother; and that her daughter, whom his warm heart acknowledged as a ſiſter, was with him under the ſame roof, and, like him, the innocent inheriter of her father's ſhame.

Whilſt theſe multifarious and painful meditations were agitating his perturbed mind, Dr. Cavendiſh found repoſe on a couch, and Pembroke Somerſet, every inſtant feeling greater abhorrence to his ungrateful taſk, reſolved once more to try the influence of entreaty on the otherwiſe generous ſpirit of his father. With a half hoping, half deſponding heart, he commenced this laſt attempt, to ſhake, if poſſible, ſo fatal a reſolution:

"*To Sir Robert Somerſet, Bart. Somerſet Caſtle.*

"I have not ventured into the preſence of my dear father, ſince he uttered thoſe dreadful words, which I would give up my exiſtence to believe I had never heard. You denounced a curſe upon me, if I oppoſed your will to immediately break all connexion with the man who preſerved my life. When I think on this; when I remember that it was from *you* I received a command ſo inexplicable in yourſelf, ſo diſgraceful to me, I am nearly mad: and what I ſhall be, ſhould you, by repeating your

your injunctions, force me to obey them, Heaven only knows! but I feel that I cannot ſurvive the loſs of my honour, and the ſacrifice of my character for every principle of virtue, which ſuch conduct muſt forever deſtroy.

"O, my father! I conjure you! reflect, before, in compliance with an oath, which it was almoſt guilt to make, you decree your only ſon to everlaſting ſhame and remorſe! Act how I will, I ſhall never be happy more. I cannot live under your malediction; and ſhould I give up my friend, my conſcience will reproach me at every inſtant of my exiſtence. Can I draw that breath which he prolonged, and ceaſe to remember, that I have abandoned him to want and miſery? It were vain to flatter myſelf, that he will condeſcend to eſcape either, by the munificence which you offer as a compenſation for my friendſhip. No; I cannot believe that his ſenſible and independent nature is ſo changed: circumſtances never had any power over the nobility of his ſoul.

" The hand of misfortune, which threw Count Sobieſki friendleſs on the bounty of England, cannot make him appear otherwiſe in my eyes, than as that idol of Warſaw, whoſe ſmile was honour, whoſe friendſhip conferred diſtinction. Though deprived " of the ſplendour of command; though the eager circle of friends no longer cluſter round him; though a ſtranger in this country, and without a home; though in place of an equipage and retinue, he is followed by calamity and neglect; yet, in my mind, I ſtill ſee him in his car of triumph: I ſee not only the oppoſer of his nation's enemies, but the vanquiſher of his own deſires; I ſee the heir of a princely houſe, even when deſerted by mankind, yet encompaſſed by his virtues; I ſee him, though caſt out from a hardened and unjuſt ſociety, ſtill ſurrounded by the lingering ſpirits of thoſe who have fled to better worlds!" And this is the man, my dear father, (whom I am ſure, had he been of any other country than Poland, you would have ſelected from all other men, to be the friend and example of your

your ſon;) this is he, whom you command me to thruſt away!

"I beſeech you, to reconſider this injunction! I am now writing under the ſame roof with him: it depends on you, my ever revered father, whether I am doing ſo for the laſt time; whether this is the laſt day in which your ſon is to feel himſelf a man of honour; whether he is henceforth to be a wretch overwhelmed with ſhame and ſorrow!

"I have not yet dared to utter one word of what your cruel orders dictated, to my unhappy friend; he is now retired to a room to obtain ſome reſt, after the anguiſh of witneſſing the death of Lady Tinemouth who died this night, in conſequence of an illneſs which only laſted eight-and-forty hours. Should I have to tell him, that he is to loſe me too,—but I cannot add more. Your own heart, my dear father, muſt tell you, that my ſoul is on the rack, till I have an anſwer to this letter.

"Before I ſhut my paper, let me implore you on my knees! whatever you

may decide, do not hate me; do not load my breaking heart with a parent's curse! Whatever I may be, however low and degraded in my own eyes, still, that I have sacrificed what is most precious to me, to my father, will impart the only consolation that will then have power to reach your dutiful son,

"Pembroke Somerset."

"*Harrowby Abbey,*
Five o'clock in the morning."

Dr. Cavendish remained in a profound sleep, whilst Pembroke, with an aching heart, having written the above letter, and dispatched it with a man and horse, tried to compose himself, to half an hour's forgetfulness of life and its turmoils; but he found his attempts as ineffectual as those of his friend.

Thaddeus tossed and tumbled on his restless pillow. Reluctant to disturb the doctor and Somerset, whom he hoped, having less cause for regret, had found that repose which he sought in vain, he remained

remained in bed. He longed for morning. Any change of ſituation ſeemed to his irritated nerves, better than the ſtate he was in; and, with ſome gleams of pleaſure, he watched the dawn break, and the ſun riſe behind the oppoſite hill. He got up, opened the window, and looking out, ſaw a man throw himſelf off a horſe that was all in a foam, and enter the houſe. The next minute the clock ſtruck eight.

Surpriſed at this circumſtance, Thaddeus deſcended to the parlour, where he found the man; who, being Pembroke's meſſenger, had returned expreſs from the caſtle, bearing an order from Sir Robert, (who was ſeized alarmingly ill,) that his ſon ſhould come back immediately.

Diſmayed to the ſoul with this new diſtreſs, Mr. Somerſet gave the Count ſuch a ſtrain to his breaſt when he bade him farewel, as might have informed a more ſuſpicious perſon, that it was intended for a final parting; but Thaddeus diſcerned nothing more in the anguiſh of his friend's countenance, than fear

for the ſafety of Sir Robert; and, fervently wiſhing his recovery, he bade Pembroke remember, that ſhould more aſſiſtance be neceſſary, Dr. Cavendiſh would remain at the Abbey till Lady Albina's return to the Wold.

Mr. Somerſet being gone; towards noon, when the Count was anxiouſly waiting the appearance of the phyſician from the room of his ſiſter, he was ſurpriſed by the abrupt entrance of two gentlemen. He roſe, and bowing, inquired what were their buſineſs? The elder of the men, with a ſwoln countenance, and in a voice of thunder, announced himſelf to be the Earl of Tinemouth, and the other as his ſon.

"We are come," continued he, ſtanding at a haughty diſtance, "we are come, to carry from this neſt of infamy, Lady Albina Stanhope, whom ſome one of her mother's paramours,—perhaps you, Sir? dared to ſteal from her father's houſe, yeſterday evening. Tell me, if you do not wiſh to meet the chaſtiſement due to your ſituation, where my daughter is?"

With

With difficulty the Count Sobiſki could ſurpreſs the paſſions that were riſing in his breaſt. He turned a ſcornful glance on the perſon of Lord Harwold, (who, with an air of inſufferable deriſion, was coolly meaſuring his figure through an eye-glaſs;) and then replying to the Earl, ſaid in a firm voice; "My lord, whoever you ſuppoſe me to be, it matters not; I now ſtand in the place of Lady Tinemouth's executor; and, to my laſt gaſp, I will prove myſelf the defender of her injured name."

"Her lover!" interrupted Lord Harwold, turning on his heel.

"Her defender, Sir!" repeated Thaddeus, with a tremendous frown; "and ſhame and ſorrow will purſue the ſon, that requires a ſtranger to ſupply his duty."

"Wretch!" cried the Earl, forgetting his aſſumed loftineſs, and advancing paſſionately towards Thaddeus, with his ſtick held up; "How dare you addreſs ſuch language to an Engliſh nobleman?"

"By the right of Nature, which holds her laws over all mankind:" returned he, calmly

calmly looking on the raiſed ſtick, "When an Engliſh nobleman forgets that he is a ſon, he is amenable to meet reproach from the meaneſt vaſſal he commands."

"You ſee, my lord," cried Harwold, ſliding behind his father, "what we bring on ourſelves by harbouring theſe democratic foreigners! Sir," added he, addreſſing himſelf to Thaddeus; "your dangerous principles ſhall be communicated to the Alien-office! Such fellows ought to be hanged."

Sobieſki eyed the enraged little lord, with contempt; and, turning to the Earl, who was again opening his lips to ſpeak, he ſaid in an unaltered tone, "I cannot gueſs Lord Tinemouth, what is the reaſon of this attack on me. I came here by mere accident; I found the Counteſs ill; and, from reſpect to her excellent qualities, I remained with her till her eyes were cloſed for ever. She prayed to ſee her daughter before ſhe died. What human heart could deny a mother

ſuch

ſuch a requeſt? and my friend Pembroke Somerſet undertook to bring Lady Albina to the Abbey."

"Pembroke Somerſet!" echoed the Earl, "A pretty guard for my daughter truly! I make no doubt, he is juſt ſuch a raſcal as his father; juſt ſuch another as yourſelf! I am not to be impoſed on by your falſehoods: I know Lady Tinemouth to have been a diſgrace to me; and you, to be that German adventurer, on whoſe account I ſent her from London."

Surpriſed at this unexpected calumny on the memory of a woman, whoſe fame from any other mouth, came as unſullied as purity itſelf, Thaddeus gazed with horror at the furious countenance of the man whom he believed to be his father. His heart ſwelled; his temples throbbed; and, not deigning to reply to a charge as unmanly as it was falſe, he quietly took out of his pocket the two letters which the Counteſs had dictated to her huſband and her ſon.

Lord Harwold tore his open, caſt his eyes over the firſt words, then crumpling it

it up in his hand, threw it from him, exclaiming, "I am not to be frightened, either by her arts, or the lies of her fellows."

Thaddeus, no longer maſter of himſelf, ſprung towards this unnatural ſon, and, ſeizing his arm with the ſtrength of a Hercules; "Lord Harwold!" cried he, in a dreadful voice, "If it were not that I have ſome mercy on you for that parent's ſake, whom like a parricide, you are giving a ſecond death by ſuch murderous ſlander, I would reſent her wrongs at the hazard of your worthleſs life!"

"My lord! my lord!" cried the trembling Harwold, quaking under the gripe of Thaddeus, and ſhrinking from the terrible brightneſs of his eyes; "my lord! my lord, ſave me!"

The Earl, almoſt ſuffocated with rage, called out, "Ruffian! Let go my ſon!" and again raiſing his arm, aimed a blow at the head of Thaddeus, who, wrenching the ſtick out of the foaming lord's hand, ſnapped it in two, and threw the pieces out of the window.

Lord

Lord Harwold took this opportuntity to ring the bell violently; on which ſummons, his own two ſervants entered the room.

"Now, you low-born, inſolent ſcoundrel!" cried the diſarmed Earl, ſtamping with his feet, and pointing to the men who ſtood in the door-way; "You ſhall be turned neck and heels out of this houſe. Richard, James, collar that fellow inſtantly."

Thaddeus, only extended his arm to the men, (who were confuſedly looking on each other,) and calmly ſaid; "If either of you attempt to obey this command of your lord's, you ſhall have cauſe to repent it."

The men retreated. The Earl repeated his orders.

"Raſcals! Do as I command you, or inſtantly prepare to be turned away. I will teach you," added he, clenching his fiſt at the Count, who ſtood reſolutely and ſerenely before him, "I will teach you how to behave to a man of high birth!"

The

The footmen were again retarded from approaching, by a glance from the intimidating eyes of Thaddeus; who, turning with calm dignity to the ſtorming Earl, "You can teach me nothing about high-birth," ſaid he, "that I do not already know. Could it be of any independent benefit to a man, then had not I received the taunts and inſults which you have dared to caſt upon me."

At that moment, Dr. Cavendiſh having heard a buſtle, made his appearance. Amazed at the ſight of two ſtrangers, whom from their enraged countenances, and the proud elevation with which Thaddeus was ſtanding between them, he rightly judged to be the Earl and his ſon, he advanced towards his friend; intending to ſupport him in the attack which he ſaw was menaced, by the violent geſtures of his viſitors.

Dr. Cavendiſh," ſaid Thaddeus, ſpeaking to him as he approached; "your name muſt be a paſſport to the confidence of any man! I therefore ſhall gratify the huſband of my ever-lamented friend, by quitting

quitting this houſe; but I delegate you to the office with which ſhe entruſted me. I leave you in charge of her ſacred remains; and of the jewels, which you will find in her ladyſhip's room. She deſired that half of them might be given with her bleſſing to her daughter; and the other half, with her pardon, to her ſon."

"Tell me, Dr. Cavendiſh," cried the Earl, as Thaddeus was paſſing him to leave the room; "Who is that inſolent fellow? By heaven, he ſhall ſmart for this!"

"Aye, that he ſhall;" added Lord Harwold; "if I have any intereſt with the Duke of Portland."

Dr. Cavendiſh with a fluſhed cheek, was preparing to ſpeak, when Thaddeus turning round at this laſt threat of the viſcount's, ſaid, "If I did not feel myſelf as high above Lord Harwold, as heaven is from the earth, perhaps he might provoke me to treat him as he merits; but I ſpurn ſuch reſentment, as I deſpiſe him. For you, my lord;" added he, addreſſing the Earl with an agitated countenance and voice; "there is an angel above, who pleads

pleads againſt the inſults that you have obſtinately heaped on an innocent man."

Thaddeus diſappeared as he uttered the laſt word; and, haſtening from the houſe and park, ſtopped at a farmer's cottage, near the brow of the hill. The owners of this humble little place, being the parents of one of Lady Tinemouth's maids, gladly welcomed the ſo highly-praiſed Mr. Conſtantine; and offered him the command of their houſe, until he might find it convenient to quit the neighbourhood.

Any proſpect of repoſe, promiſed elyſium to him: with haraſſed and torn nerves, he took poſſeſſion of an apartment, which looked down upon the road that led from the Abbey to the town. The rapidity of the late events, bewildered his ſenſes like the illuſions of a dream. He had ſeen his father, his brother, his ſiſter; and moſt probably he had parted from them for ever! At leaſt he hoped, that he ſhould never again be tortured with the ſight of Lord Tinemouth or his ſon.

"How!" thought he, whilſt he walked up and down his ſolitary apartment, "how could

could the noble nature of my mother, love ſuch a man? And how could he have held ſo long an empire over the pure heart of the Counteſs?"

Over and over again, he aſked himſelf that queſtion; but could return no anſwer: He could no where diſcern in the bloated features, and paſſionate geſtures of the Earl, any of that beauty of countenance, or grace of manners, which had charmed alike Thereſe Sobieſki, and the tender Adeliza. Like thoſe hideous chaſms which are dug deep in the land by the impetuous ſweep of a torrent, the courſe of violent paſſions leaves vaſt and irreparable traces on the ſoul. So it was with Lord Tinemouth.

"Gracious Providence!" ejaculated Thaddeus; "How legibly does vice or virtue write itſelf on the countenance! The Earl's figure and features may be fine, but the lineaments of profligacy have degraded every part of him. Good God! Can he be my father! Can it be his blood that is now running in my veins?

Can

Can it be his blood, that riſes at this moment with deteſtation againſt him?"

Before the ſun ſet, Thaddeus was arouſed from theſe painful ſoliloquies, by ſtill more painful emotions: He ſaw from his window, a hearſe driving at full gallop up the road, which aſcended to the Abbey; and, preſently return, with a more ſolemn pace, followed by a poſt-chaiſe and the Earl's coach.

"Unfeeling wretches!" cried Thaddeus, leaning out of the window; and purſuing with his eye, the tips of the ſable plumes as the cavalcade wound round the road; "Could ye not allow this poor corſe a little reſt? Muſt her injuries be extended to the grave? Muſt her cold relics be inſulted, be hurried to the tomb, without reverence, without decency?"

The noble heart of Thaddeus, diſtended, beat, and writhed with horror, at this climax of the Earl's barbarity. Dr. Cavendiſh entered: he began to ſpeak of the perpetrators of an act, which he deemed ſacrilege againſt the dead; but Thaddeus could

could not bear it; and he interrupted him by enquiring how Lady Albina had borne ſuch brutal treatment of her mother's remains.

"Very ill," returned the Doctor; "and though I warned the Earl, that to compel her Ladyſhip to follow the hearſe, would be at the imminent peril of her life, yet he would not be ſoftened. He put her into the coach in a ſtate of inſenſibility with no other aſſiſtant than a woman ſervant, who received her into her arms; and then, loaded with the ſecret curſes of every honeſt heart, I ſaw him ſet off in the poſt-chaiſe which was already occupied by his deteſtable ſon.—Heaven's malediction muſt follow them!"

The doctor purſued the ſubject. Sobieſki's wearied ſpirits liſtened to him with patience; for nothing could now be ſaid to encreaſe an abhorrence which had gained its height. He avowed to himſelf that he hated the Earl; and he hearkened in gloomy ſilence to the new crimes recounted by his friend.

In the midſt of this depreſſing converſation, a courier arrived from Dr. Cavendiſh's Stamford patient, deſiring that he would return immediately. The gentleman having ſuſtained a relapſe, Cavendiſh, with ſome reluctance to quit the Count, (whom he ſtill knew by no other name than Conſtantine,) ordered the chaiſe to the door. He ſhook hands with Thaddeus, requeſted he would let him hear from him, and bidding him many affectionate adieus, looked out of the carriage window, till the faint light of the moon, and the fading glimmer of the cottage candles, failed to make the little ſpot which contained his friend, even diſcernable.

CHAP. V.

FOR the first time during many nights, Thaddeus slept soundly; but his dreams were disturbed; and, he awoke from them at an early hour unrefreshed, and in much fever.

The simple breakfast which his cottage host and hostess set before him, was hardly touched. Their nicely dressed dinner met with the same fate. He was ill, and neither possessed appetite nor spirits to eat. The good people being too civil to intrude upon him, he sat alone in his window from eight o'clock, (at which he had arisen,) till the cawing of the rooks as they returned to the Abbey woods, reminded him that evening was coming on. He was uneasy at the absence of Somerset; not so much on his own account, as on that of Sir Robert, whose encreased dander might have occasioned this delay:

However, he hoped otherwiſe. Longing earneſtly for a temporary aſſylum under the roof of his friend, he truſted that the ſympathy of Pembroke would heal all his wounds, and fit him, (if it were required,) yet farther to brave the buffets of adverſe fortune. Nor was Miſs Beaufort forgotten. If ever one idea more than another, ſweetened the bitterneſs of his reflections, it was the remembrance of the lovely Mary. Whenever her image roſe before him; whether ſtanding with folded arms, and looking with vacant gaze on the valley beneath; or, when caſt upon his watchful pillow, he opened his aching eyes to the morning light; ſtill, as her beautiful figure preſented itſelf to his mind, he ſighed; but it was a ſigh laden with balm; it did not tear his breaſt like thoſe which were wrung from him by the hard hand of calamity and inſult; it was the ſoft breath of love, which makes man dream of heaven, whilſt it betrays him to the grave. Thaddeus, thought it delightful to recollect how ſhe had looked on him; it was happineſs, to

know

know that he owed his liberty to her; and the anticipation, that he ſhould again dwell in her ſmiles; again draw bliſs from her eyes, ſwelled, agitated, and intoxicated his ſoul.

"Sweet Mary!" murmured he, "I ſhall ſee thee once more! I ſhall again experience thy kindneſs! I will thank thee with my heart; and think myſelf bleſt, in being allowed the privilege of loving thee in ſilence, and for ever."

The ſight of Pembroke riding through the farmer's fields towards the cottage, agreeably recalled the wandering mind of Sobieſki. He went out to meet him; Mr. Somerſet, putting his horſe on a gallop, was at his friend's ſide, and had alighted, before he could croſs the firſt meadow. Thaddeus immediately inquired after the Baronet's health. Pembroke anſwered the queſtion, with an incoherency devoid of all meaning. Thaddeus looked at him with ſurpriſe. They walked towards the houſe, but he did not ſeem to recover himſelf; his abſence of mind, and the wild rambling

of his eyes whenever he was ſpoken to, were ſo ſtriking, that the Count entertained no doubt of ſome dreadful accident.

As ſoon as they entered the little parlour, Pembroke threw himſelf into a chair, and, throwing off his hat, wiped the perſpiration from his face, which though a cold November evening, was ſtreaming down his forehead. Thaddeus felt ſuſpence too painful to be endured.

"What is the matter, dear Pembroke? Is Miſs Beaufort well?"

"Perfectly:" returned he, "Every body is well, excepting myſelf and my father, who I verily believe has loſt his ſenſes; at any rate, he will drive me mad."

The manner in which this reply was uttered, aſtoniſhed Thaddeus ſo much, that he could only gaze on the convulſed features of his friend with wonder. Pembroke obſerved the amazement which ſat in his eyes, and laying his hand on his arm; "My dear, dear Sobieſki!" ſaid he, "What do I not owe to you? Good Heaven, how humbled do I feel myſelf in your

your ſight! But, there is a Power above, who knows how intimately you are woven with every artery of this heart!"

"I believe it, my kind Pembroke;" cried Thaddeus, yet more alarmed than before; "Tell me what it is that diſtreſſes you? If my counſel, or my ſympathy, can offer any thing to comfort or aſſiſt you, you know that I am your own."

Pembroke burſt into tears, and covering his ſtreaming his eyes with his handkerchief, exclaimed, "I am indeed diſtreſſed! Diſtreſſed, even beyond your comfort. O! How can I ſpeak it! You will deſpiſe my father, Thaddeus! You will ſpurn me!"

"Impoſſible:" cried he, with energy; though his fluſhed cheek and fainting heart, immediately declared that he had anticipated what he muſt hear.

"I ſee," cried Pembroke, regarding the altered features of his friend with a glance of agony; "I ſee, that you think it is poſſible, that my father can ſink me below my own contempt."

Thaddeus, felt the benumbing touch of ingratitude run through his veins; his frame was chilled, was petrified; but his juſt affection, and calmed countenance, proclaimed how true a judgment he had paſſed on the whole. He took the burning hand of Mr. Somerſet in his own, and, with a ſteady and conſoling voice, ſaid, "Aſſure yourſelf, dear Pembroke, whatever be the commands of your father, I ſhall adhere to them. I can underſtand by theſe generous emotions, that he objects to receive me as your friend. Perhaps," added he, a gloom of ſuſpicion flaſhing through his mind; "perhaps Miſs Beaufort may have perceived the devotedneſs of my heart, and diſdaining my——"

"Huſh, for Heaven's ſake!" cried Pembroke, ſtarting from his chair; "Do not implicate my poor couſin! Do not add to her diſappointment, the miſery that you ſuſpect her! No, Thaddeus," continued he in a calmer tone, "Mary Beaufort loves you: ſhe confeſſed it in an agony of grief on my boſom, juſt before I came away; and only through her, dare I ever

expect

expect to meet forgiveneſs from *you*. In ſpite of my father, you may marry her. She has no curſe to dread; ſhe, need not ſacrifice all that is moſt precious in her ſight, to the obſtinate caprice of criminal reſentment!"

"A curſe!" re-iterated Thaddeus, "How is this? What have I done to deſerve ſuch hatred from your father?"

"O! nothing;" cried Pembroke, "nothing. My father never ſaw you. My father thanks you for all you have done for me; but it is your country that he hates. Some Polander, years back, injured him; and my father took a fatal oath againſt the whole nation. He declares, he cannot, he will not break it, were he by ſo doing, to ſave his own life, or even mine; for, (Heaven forgive me!) I was this morning wrought up to ſuch a pitch of phrenzy, that I threatened to deſtroy myſelf, rather than ſacrifice my gratitude and honour to his cruel commands! Nay, to convince you that his is no perſonal enmity to yourſelf, he ordered me to give you writings which will put you in poſſeſ-

ſion of five hundred a year for ever. I have them with me."

All the pride of his princely houſe, roſe at once in the breaſt of Thaddeus. Though full of indignation at this inſult of Sir Robert's, he regarded the averted face of his friend with compaſſion, whilſt in a firm voice, he rejected the degrading compromiſe.

"Tell your father," added he, addreſſing Pembroke in a tone, which even his affection could not ſoften from a command; "that my abſence is not to be bought with money, nor my friendſhip ſo rewarded."

Pembroke covered his burning face with his hands. This ſight, at once brought down the haughty ſpirit of the Count, who continued, in gentler accents; "Whatever be the ſentiments of Sir Robert Somerſet, they ſhall meet with due attention from me. He is your father, therefore I reſpect him; but he has put it out of his power to oblige me: I cannot accept his bounty. Though your heart, my deareſt Pembroke,

is

is above all price, yet I will make it a ſacrifice to your duty."—And by ſo doing, put the laſt ſeal on my misfortunes! was the meaning of the heavy ſigh which accompanied his laſt words.

Pembroke traverſed the room in an agony. "Merciful Providence!" cried he, wringing his claſped hands; "direct me! O! Thaddeus, if you could read my tortured heart, you would pity me; you would ſee that this buſineſs is tearing my ſoul from my body. What am I to do? I cannot, I will not, part with you for ever."

The Count went up to him, and drew him to a ſeat; "Be ſatisfied," ſaid he, "that I am convinced of your affection. Whatever may happen, this aſſurance will be ſufficient to give *me* comfort; therefore, I entreat you, dear Pembroke, by that affection, not to bring regret to me, and reproach on yourſelf, by diſobeying the will of your father! If we ſeparate for life, remember my beloved friend, that the ſpan of our exiſtence here, is ſhort; we ſhall

meet again in a happier world; perhaps more bleſt, for having immolated our wiſhes to hard duty in this."

"Ceaſe, Sobieſki, ceaſe!" cried Pembroke, "I can draw no conſolation from this reaſoning. It is not duty to obey a hatred little ſhort of diſtraction; and, if we now ſeparate, I know I ſhall never feel peace more. Good Heaven! what comfort can I find, when I know that you are expoſed to all the indignities which the world levels againſt the unfortunate? Can I indulge in the luxuries of my father's houſe, when I know that you have neither a home nor ſubſiſtence? No, Thaddeus, I am not ſuch a villain. I will not give you up, though my father ſhould load me with curſes; I truſt there is a juſt power above, that would avert them."

Perceiving that argument at this time would not only be fruitleſs, but might probably incenſe his friend's irritated nature to the commiſſion of ſome raſh action, Thaddeus pretended to overlook the frantic geſture and voice which terminated this ſpeech;

ſpeech; and, aſſuming a ſerene air, he replied: "Let this be the ſubject of future converſations. At preſent, I muſt conjure you by the happineſs of us both, to return to the Caſtle. You know my meſſage to Sir Robert. Preſent my reſpects to your aunt; and," added he, after a pauſe, "aſſure Miſs Beaufort, that whilſt I have life, her goodneſs will be its moſt animating principle."

Pembroke interrupted him. "Why theſe meſſages, dear Thaddeus? Do not ſuppoſe, that if I fulfil my father's order to return to Somerſet to-night, that it is our ſeparation. Gracious Heaven! Is it ſo eaſy a matter to part for ever?"

"Not for ever! O no:" replied Thaddeus, graſping his hand; "we ſhall ſee each other again; only meanwhile, repeat thoſe meſſages to your aunt and couſin. Go, my dear Pembroke, to your father; and may the Lord of heaven bleſs you!"

The laſt words were ſpoken in almoſt a ſtifled voice, as he opened his arms and ſtrained his friend to his breaſt.

"I ſhall

"I ſhall ſee you to-morrow?" cried Pembroke; "on no other condition I leave you now."

Thaddeus made no farther anſwer to this demand, (which he determined ſhould never be granted,) than a ſecond embrace. Pembroke went out of the room, to order his horſes; then returning again, he ſtood in the door-way, and holding out his hand to the Count, ſaid, "Farewel, till to-morrow." Thaddeus ſhook it warmly, and he diſappeared.

When the outward door cloſed after his friend, the Count remained on the ſeat into which he had thrown himſelf. He did not venture to move, leſt he ſhould by chance catch a ſecond glance of Pembroke from the window. Now that he was gone, he felt the full worth of what he had relinquiſhed. He had reſigned a man who loved him; one who had known and revered his ever-lamented grandfather, and his mother; the only one with whom he could have diſcourſed of their virtues! He felt that he was

ſevered,

ſevered from him, the link which had united his preſent ſtate with his former fortunes; and throwing his arms along a table that ſtood near him, he leaned his aching head upon them, and in idea followed with an anguiſhed heart, the progreſs and reception of his friend at the caſtle.

The racking miſery which tortured the the mind of Mr. Somerſet, was not borne with equal reſignation. Conſcious of having inflicted freſh wounds on the breaſt of his noble friend, his ſpirits were ſo ill adapted for ſociety, that he felt rather pleaſed than diſappointed, when he found the ſupper-room at the caſtle quite vacant, and only one cover on the table awaiting his arrival.

He aſked a few queſtions of the ſervants, who informed him that it was already late, paſt twelve o'clock; and that Sir Robert who was taken worſe, had retired to bed early in the evening.

"And where are my aunt and couſin?" demanded Pembroke.

One

One of the men replied, that in conſequence of Miſs Beaufort having been ſuddenly indiſpoſed, both the ladies had left the ſupper-room before eleven. Pembroke readily gueſſed the cauſe of this diſorder: he too truly adjudged it to Mary's extreme anxiety reſpecting the reception which the Count Sobieſki would give to his diſgraceful errand; and, ſighing bitterly, he ſaid no more, but went inſtantly to his chamber.

The reſtleſs ſtate of his mind awoke Mr. Somerſet by times. Full of ſolicitude for the ſucceſs of an application which he intended to make to Miſs Beaufort, he traverſed the terrace for an hour before he was ſummoned to breakfaſt. The baronet continuing unwell, the ladies only were in the room when he entered. Mrs. Dorothy, who had learnt the particulars of the late events from the agitated Mary, longed to aſk Pembroke how his friend would act on her brother's command; but every time that ſhe moved her lips, his inflamed eye and

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wan countenance made her ſtop, and fear to venture on the ſubject. Mary ſat in mute dejection, watching the hurried actions of her couſin; and when, after he had ſwallowed a baſon of tea, he roſe up, and took up his hat to leave the room, ſhe looked anxiouſly towards him. Pembroke turned round at the ſame moment, and holding out his hand to her, ſaid, "Come, Mary; I want to ſay ſomething to you. Will you walk with me on the terrace?"

Miſs Beaufort, with trepidation and a beating heart, took his arm, and proceeded in ſilence till they reached the gravel walk. A mutual, and deep drawn ſigh, was the firſt opening of a converſation, on which the ſouls of both hung with intereſt hope and dread. Pembroke was the firſt who began.

"My dear, dear, Mary," ſaid he, "you are now my ſole dependance. From what I told you yeſterday of my father's ſtubborn inflexibility, we can have no hope of his relenting: indeed, after what has

has paſſed, I could not flatter myſelf that Thaddeus Sobieſki would on any account ſubmit to an obligation at his hands. Already he has refuſed, with all the indignation I expected, Sir Robert's offer of an annuity. My dear couſin, how can I exiſt, and yet witneſs this noble friend in diſtreſs, and living without the ſuccour of my friendſhip? Heaven knows, this muſt be the caſe; for I would ſooner periſh than venture to inſult the man whom my father has treated ſo ill, with any pecuniary offers from me! Therefore, dear Mary, it is on you alone that I depend. Thaddeus adores you, and you love him. Marry him, my beloved couſin," cried he, catching her hand to his lips, "and relieve my heart from a load of ſhame and miſery! Be generous, my ſweet Mary," added he, ſupporting her now trembling frame againſt his breaſt; "Act up to your noble nature, and offer him by me, that hand which his calamities and diſintereſtedneſs preclude him from requeſting."

Miſs

Miſs Beaufort, hardly able to articulate, from the emotions which choaked her utterance, replied, " I would give him all that I poſſeſs, could it purchaſe him one tranquil hour; I would ſerve him for ever, could I do it and be unknown; but ——"

" O, do not heſitate! Do not doubt!" interrupted Pembroke, " To ſerve your friends, I know that you are capable of the moſt extraordinary exertions; I know that there is nothing within the verge of poſſibility, that your generous diſpoſition would not attempt: then, my beloved Mary, dare to be what you are; by having the magnanimity to act as you know you ought; by offering your hand to him, ſhew the noble Sobieſki, that you really deſerve the devotion of a hero's heart."

" Dear Pembroke," replied Mary, wiping the ſtill gliding tears from her burning cheek, " after the confeſſion which you drew from me yeſterday, I will not deny, that to poſſeſs the eſteem of your friend would render me the happieſt

of

of created beings; but I cannot believe what your ſanguine affection tells me; I cannot ſuppoſe, ſituated as I was at Lady Dundas's, under a cloud of faſhion, and ſurrounded by frivolous and contemptible ſociety, that he ſhould diſcover any thing in me to reſpect: every way embarraſſed as I was, diſliking my companions, afraid of my own intereſt in him, a veil was drawn over my mind, through which he could neither judge of my good nor bad qualities: how then can I flatter myſelf, or do the Count Sobieſki ſuch injury, as to imagine that he could feel any preference for ſuch an inſignificant character as I muſt have appeared?"

It was ſome time before Pembroke could ſhake the hold which this prepoſſeſſion had taken of Miſs Beaufort's mind. After having ſet in every poſſible light the terms with which his friend had ſpoken of her name; he at length convinced her of what her heart ſo earneſtly wiſhed to believe, that ſhe was not entirely indifferent to Sobieſki.

Mr.

Mr. Somerſet's next atchievement was to overcome her ſcruples againſt commiſſioning him with the meſſage he was deſirous to communicate to Thaddeus. Owing to the continual recurrence of her fears, that the warmth of her couſin might have too highly coloured the firſt object of debate, this taſk was not more eaſy to accompliſh than the former. In vain ſhe remonſtrated, in vain ſhe doubted, in vain demurred; Pembroke would not be denied; and as with faultering lips, ſhe aſſented to the permiſſion which he had almoſt extorted; ſhe threw her arms round his neck, and implored him to be careful of her honour; to remember that ſhe had put into his charge all that was moſt precious to her, the modeſty of her ſex, and her own delicacy.

Pembroke, delighted at this conſent, notwithſtanding he received it through the medium of many heavy tears, embraced his couſin with ten thouſand animating promiſes of future happineſs; and

and having allowed her to enter the houſe, mounted his horſe, and ſet off on the full gallop, towards Harrowby-Hill.

CHAP. VI.

WHEN Thaddeus recovered from the reverie into which he had been thrown by the departure of Mr. Somerset, he considered how he might remove out of a country wherein he had only met with, and occasioned, distress.

The horrid price which Pembroke's father had set on the continuance of their friendship, rendered it necessary that his flight should be immediate. Averse to a second interview with his friend, which could only produce them pain; he determined that not another morn should rise upon him in Lincolnshire; and taking a pen, with all the future loneliness of his fate painted on his heart, he wrote two letters.

One he addressed to Mr. Somerset, bidding him that farewel, which he confessed

feſſed he could never have taken. As he wrote, his hand trembled, his boſom ſwelled; and he haſtily ſhut his eye-lids to withold his tears from ſhewing themſelves on the paper: his emotion, his grief, were driven back, were concealed; but the tenderneſs of his ſoul flowed over the letter. He forgave Pembroke's father, for Pembroke's ſake; and, in ſpite of their perſonal diſunion, he vowed that no earthly conſideration ſhould reſtrain his love from following the ſteps of his friend, even into the regions of eternity. He cloſed his melancholy epiſtle, with informing Mr. Somerſet, that as he ſhould quit England immediately, any ſearch after him, which his generous nature might dictate, would be in vain.

Though Thaddeus Sobieſki would have diſdained a life of dependence on the greateſt potentate of the world; though he rejected with the ſame ſincerity a ſimilar propoſal from his friend, and deſpiſed the degrading offer of Sir Robert; yet he felt no diſparagement to his dignity, no infringe-

enfringement on the disinterested nature of his friendship, when he accepted, and resolved to retain, the money which Pembroke had conveyed to him in prison. Thaddeus never acted but from principle. His honourable and penetrating mind knew exactly at what point to draw the tender thread of delicacy. Pride and independence, with him, were distinct terms. Receiving assistance from a friend, and leaning on him wholly for support, had different meanings: he accepted the first with gratitude; he would have thought it impossible to live and endure the last. On these premises, Pembroke was never pained by any attempt to return his bounty. Indeed, Thaddeus would have considered himself unworthy to confer a benefit, if he had not known how to receive one. This spirit left no part of Miss Beaufort's obligation on his mind, but its sweetness; and with these impressions, and a throbbing heart, he began a short address to her.

" *To Miſs Beaufort.*

" My faculties ſeem to loſe their power, when I take up my pen to addreſs, for the firſt and the laſt time, Miſs Beaufort. I hardly know what I would ſay—what I ought; I dare not venture to write all that I feel. But have you not been my benefactreſs? Did you not aſſert my character, and give me liberty, when I was calumniated, and in diſtreſs? Did you not ward from me the ſcorn of unpitying folly? Did you not conſole me with your own compaſſion? You have done all this; and ſurely you will not deſpiſe the gratitude of a heart which you have condeſcended to ſooth and to comfort? At leaſt, I cannot leave England forever, without imploring bleſſings on the head of Miſs Beaufort; without thanking her on my knees, on which I am writing, for that gracious and benign ſpirit, which diſcovered a breaking heart under the maſk of ſerenity; which penetrated through the garb of poverty and dependence, and ſaw that

that the contemned Conſtantine was not what he ſeemed! Your ſmiles, Miſs Beaufort; your voice, ſpeaking commiſeration, were my ſweeteſt conſolations during thoſe heavy months of ſorrow, which I endured at Dundas Houſe: I contemplated you as a pitying angel, ſent to reconcile me to a life which had already become a burthen. Theſe are the benefits which Miſs Beaufort has beſtowed on a friendleſs exile; theſe are the benefits which ſhe has beſtowed on me! And they are written on my ſoul. Not till I go down into the grave ſhall they be forgotten. Oh! not even then, for when I riſe again, I ſhall find them ſtill regiſtered there!

"Farewel, moſt reſpected, moſt dear Miſs Beaufort. May the Father of Heaven bleſs, with his choiceſt care, her, whoſe name ſhall ever be firſt in the prayers of her moſt grateful, moſt devoted ſervant,

THADDEUS CONSTANTINE SOBIESKI."

"*Harrowby Hill,*
11 *o'clock at night.*"

When he had finiſhed this epiſtle, with a paralyzed hand he incloſed it in the envelope which contained Somerſet's; then writing a few lines to the good old farmer, he begged him to accept the note which they contained, as a ſmall compenſation for his great hoſpitality; and, having ſealed both packets, he diſpoſed them ſo on the table, that they might be the firſt things ſeen on entering the room.

It now being midnight, he thought it high time to ſet out on his diſmal journey. Having tied ſome linen in a grey ſilk handkerchief, which had formerly been wrapped round his neck by Lady Sara, one wet evening, in Groſvenor Place; he put all his remaining money into his pocket. It did not exceed thirty pounds; the reſt having been expended in his way to the Abbey, and in defraying little expences attending the illneſs of the Counteſs, to which her purſe (ever kept low by the tardineſs of the Earl's payments) was not prepared to anſwer. However, as he determined to walk to London, where he would embark for America, he hoped

that it would at leaſt hold out, until he had landed on a ſhore, from whence he truſted never to return.

"Ah!" cried he, as he gently cloſed the window by which he leaped into the little garden, "What accumulated ſins, O Ruſſia, will be heaped upon thy head! Every haſty ſigh that rebels in my breaſt, againſt the almighty hand, which is again driving me out a wanderer on the wide world, calls vengeance upon thee! how many, wretched country!" added he, reſting on the bar of the outward gate; "how many, haſt thou driven from their homes! how many haſt thou made vagabonds and murderers for that ſcanty pittance, of which with remorſeleſs and wanton gripe, they were deprived by thee!—Oh, righteous Power of Juſtice and Mercy!" cried he, ſtretching his arms towards that heaven, over which the piercing winds of a bleak October night were ſcattering the thick and pillowy clouds; "grant me fortitude to bear, with reſignation to thy will, the miſeries that I may yet have to encounter. Oh!" added he, his heart melting as the idea

preſented itſelf; "teach me to forget what I have been! Teach me to forget, that on this dreadful night, laſt year, I claſped the dying body of my dear grandfather in theſe arms!"

He could not ſpeak farther; but leaning his pale face againſt the gate, remained for a few minutes diſſolved in anguiſhed recollection: then recovering himſelf by a ſudden ſtart, he proceeded with haſty ſteps through the different meadows, till they conducted him into the high road.

It was on the tenth of October 1795, that the Count Sobieſki commenced this lonely and melancholy journey. It was on the tenth of October 1794, that he found the Palatine, bleeding to death, in the midſt of a heap of ſlain. The co-incidence of his preſent feelings with thoſe of a twelvemonth's paſt, powerfully affected Thaddeus; they recalled to him remembrances in their moſt vivid colours, which time, and the many intermediate events, had conſiderably ſoftened.

Diſtreſſed by theſe painful ſcenes, which memory, ever true to her nature, raiſed

ed before his mind's eye in rapid and long ſucceſſion; he quickened his pace; he ſlackened it; he quickened it again; but nothing could rid him of thoſe tormenting images, which ſeemed to glide around him like viſible ſpirits of the departed.

When the dawn broke, and the ſun roſe, he found himſelf advanced ſeveral miles on the ſouth ſide of Ponton Hill. The ſpiry aiſles of Harrowby Abbey were diſcernable through the miſt; and the towers of Somerſet Caſtle, from their height and ſituation, were as diſtinctly ſeen as if he had been at their baſe. Neither of theſe objects were calculated to raiſe the ſpirits of Thaddeus. The ſorrows of the Counteſs, whoſe eyes he had ſo recently cloſed; and the treatment he afterwards received from the man to whom he owed his life, were recollections which made him turn away from the Abbey with a pang, and fix his eyes on Somerſet. He looked towards its ivied head, with all the regret, and all the tenderneſs which can overflow a human heart: under that roof, he be-

lieved the eyes of his adored Mary were ſealed in ſleep; and in an inſtant his agitated ſoul addreſſed her as if ſhe had been preſent.

"Farewell, moſt lovely, moſt beloved! The conviction, that I reſign even the hope of ever again beholding thee, to the peace of my friend, ſhall give me comfort, when I am drawing my breath in a far, far diſtant world."

In this way, thus communing with his own troubled ſpirit, he walked on the whole day in his way to London. Totally abſorbed in meditation, he did not remark the gaze of curioſity which followed his elegant yet diſtreſſed figure, as he paſſed through the different towns and villages. Pondering on the paſt, the preſent, and the future, he neither felt hunger nor thirſt; but, with a fixed eye and abſtracted countenance, purſued his route, till night and wearineſs overtook him in the midſt of the high road, far from any houſe.

Thaddeus looked around, and above: the ſky was clear, and glittering with ſtars; the moon ſhining on a near branch of the Ouſe,

Ouſe, which divides Huntingdonſhire from Cambridgeſhire, lit the green heath which ſkirted its banks. Thaddeus wiſhed not for a more magnificent canopy; and, placing his wallet under his head, he lay down beneath a hillock of furze and broom, and ſlept till morning.

When he awoke from a ſleep, which fatigue and faſting had rendered more torpid than refreſhing, he found that the ſplendours of the night had been ſucceeded by a heavy rain; and that he was drenched through. He roſe up with a ſtiffneſs in his limbs, a pain in his head, and a dimneſs over his eyes, which almoſt diſabled him from moving. He readily judged that he had caught cold; and every moment feeling himſelf grow worſe, he thought it neceſſary to ſeek ſome houſe, where he might purchaſe reſt and aſſiſtance.

To this end, leaning on his ſtick, but no longer able to incumber himſelf with even the light load of his bundle, he threw it amongſt the brambles; believing from the ſymptoms which he felt, that he had not many hours to endure the ills of life, he

ſtaggered a few yards farther: no habitation appeared in ſight; his limbs became more feeble, his eyes ſeemed totally obſcured, and he ſunk down on a bank. For a minute he attempted to ſtruggle with the cold graſp of death, which he believed was faſtening on his heart.

"And are my days to be ſo ſhort! Are they to end thus?" thought he; "Merciful Providence, pardon my repining!"

Theſe were the laſt movements of the lips of Thaddeus, whilſt his blood ſeemed freezing to inſenſibility. His eyes cloſed, his head fell back; and pale and without animation, he lay at the foot of the tree near which he had dropt.

The Count had been a quarter of an hour in this death-like ſtate, when a gentleman, who was paſſing that road in his way to a country-ſeat in Cambridgeſhire, thought he perceived a man lying amongſt the nettles and graſs a little onward on the heath. The traveller immediately ſtopped his carriage, and ordering one of the outriders

riders to alight, bade him examine whether the object he saw were living or dead.

The man obeyed; and presently returning, with an affrighted countenance informed his master, that it was the body of a man, who by his dress appeared to be a gentleman, and who, being quite senseless, he supposed had been murdered by robbers. The features of the benevolent stranger immediately reflected the hue of his servant's; but ordering the chariot door to be opened, he took in his hand a bottle of drops, (which from his own invalid state, was his travelling companion,) and alighting, hastened to the side of the lifeless Thaddeus.

By this time, all the servants were collected round the spot; and the good man himself, whilst he gazed with pity on the marble features of the Count, observed with pleasure, that he saw no marks of violence. Supposing that the present accident might have been occasioned by a fit; and considering it possible by proper means to recal life; he desired that the unfortunate

perſon's waiſtcoat might be uncloſed; and, taking off his hat, he contrived to pour ſome drops into his mouth. Their warmth appeared to have renewed pulſation in the heart; for one of the ſervants, who was ſtooping, declared that it beat under his hand. When the benevolent gentleman convinced himſelf that this report was true, he ordered his ſervants to place the poor traveller in his carriage; having only another mile to go before he reached Deerhurſt, he ſaid he hoped that his charge might be reſtored at the end of their deſtination.

Whilſt the poſtilions drove in full gallop towards the houſe, the cold face of Thaddeus reſted on the boſom of the ſtranger, who continued to chafe his temples with lavender water till the chariot ſtopped before the gates. Two men carried the Count to the houſe; and, having left him with their maſter, and a medical man who reſided near, other reſtoratives were applied, which ſucceeded in recalling his wandered ſenſes. When he had completely recovered his powers, and was able

to

to look round and diſtinguiſh objects, he ſaw that he was ſupported by two gentlemen, and in a magnificent bed-chamber.

Gratitude, it may be ſaid, was the firſt born feeling in the ſoul of Thaddeus. In the moment of his revival from that ſleep, into which he believed he had fallen, till time ſhould be loſt in eternity he preſſed the hands of them who held his; not doubting but that they were the good Samaritans who had preſerved him from periſhing.

The younger of the gentlemen, perceiving by the animated luſtre which ſpread over his patient's eyes, that he was going to ſpeak, put his hand on his lips, and ſaid, "Pardon me, Sir! you muſt not ſpeak. Your life at preſent hangs on a thread; the ſlighteſt exertion would ſnap it: but, as all you want is reſt and reſuſcitation, to ſupply ſome great expence which the vital powers have ſuſtained; I muſt require, that you neither ſpeak, nor be ſpoken to, till I give permiſſion. Meanwhile, be ſatisfied, Sir, that you are in the moſt honourable hands. This gentleman," added

added he, pointing to his friend, "saw you on the heath, and brought you to his house, where you now are."

Thaddeus bowed his head to them both in sign of gratitude and compliance; and the elder left the room.

CHAP. VII.

NEXT morning, when the ſeal was taken off the lips of Thaddeus, he expreſſed in the moſt animated terms, his deep ſenſe of the humanity which had actuated both the gentlemen to take ſuch generous intereſt in his fate.

"You owe no thanks to me," replied the one who had injoined and releaſed him from ſilence, and who was alone with him; "I am only the agent of another. Yet, I do not deny, that in obeying the benevolent orders of Sir Robert Somerſet, I have frequent opportunities of gratifying my own heart."

Thaddeus was ſo confounded at this diſcovery that he could not ſpeak, and the gentleman proceeded.

"I am apothecary to Sir Robert's houſehold; and, as my excellent maſter has been long afflicted with an ill ſtate of health,

health, I live in a ſmall lodge at the other end of the park. He is the beſt man in all the county; nay, I believe I may ſay, the moſt benevolent in the kingdom; and, ſhould he die, (which his late melancholy fits too fearfully threaten,) both poor and rich would loſe their friend. Sad and ill as he was this morning, when I told him that you were out of danger, he expreſſed a pleaſure only known to the truly humane."

Thaddeus, not conſidering the wildneſs of the queſtion, haſtily demanded, "Does he know who I am?"

The honeſt apothecary ſtared at the look and tone of voice with which theſe words were delivered, and then replied, "No; Is there any reaſon, Sir, to make you wiſh that he ſhould not?"

"Certainly none:" replied Thaddeus recollecting himſelf, and ſighing; "and I ſhall be impatient till I have an opportunity of telling him how grateful I am for the goodneſs which he has ſhewn to me as a ſtranger."

The

The apothecary ſurpriſed at theſe hints, (which the Count, not conſidering their tendency, allowed to eſcape,) gathered ſufficient from them, united with the ſpeaker's ſuperior mien, to make him ſuppoſe that his patient was ſome emigrant of quality, whom Sir Robert would rejoice in having ſerved. Theſe ſurmiſes and concluſions having paſſed very quickly through the honeſt gentleman's brain, he bowed his head with that reſpect, which the generous mind is proud to pay to nobility in ruins; and reſumed:

"Whatever you may be, Sir, a peaſant or a prince, you will meet with every hoſpitality from the noble owner of this houſe. His ſpirit is equal in magnificence with the goodneſs of his heart; Deerhurſt will be rendered as comfortable to you, as great benevolence and great wealth can beſtow; and I am certain, that Sir Robert will conſider the dreadful apoplexy, that brought him from Somerſet for change of air, rather fortunate than otherwiſe, as it has afforded him an opportunity of ſerving, and knowing you."

Thaddeus

Thaddeus bluſhed at the ſtrain of this ſpeech; and, readily underſtanding what was paſſing in the mind of the apothecary, hardly knew how to reply. He pauſed for a moment, and then ſaid, "All that you have declared Sir, in praiſe of Sir Robert Somerſet, I cannot have a doubt of his deſerving. I have already felt the effects of his humanity, and ſhall ever remember that my life was prolonged by his means; but I have no pretenſions to the honour of his acquaintance. I only wiſh to ſee him, that I may thank him for what he has done; therefore, if you will permit me to riſe this evening, inſtead of to-morrow morning, you will oblige me."

To this requeſt, the apothecary gave a reſpectful, yet firm denial; and deſcended, to communicate his obſervations to his patron.

The anxiety which agitated the Count's mind, when he reflected that he was receiving all theſe obligations from his moſt implacable enemy, ſo occupied and diſturbed him, that he paſſed a ſleepleſs night. The dawn found his fever much augmented;

augmented; but no corporeal ſufferings could perſuade him to abandon the reſolution of ſeeing the Baronet, and immediately leaving his houſe: believing as he did, that all this kindneſs would have been withheld, had his hoſt known on whom he was pouring ſuch benefits, he felt as if every minute which ſaw him under Sir Robert's roof, inflicted a new outrage on his own dignity and honour.

To this end then, as ſoon as Mr. Middleton the apothecary had retired to breakfaſt, Thaddeus roſe from his bed, and was completely dreſſed before he returned. The good man expoſtulated on the raſhneſs of what he had done, and augured no leſs than a relapſe from the morning ſymptoms of his patient. Thaddeus once in his life was obſtinate, though civilly ſo; and, begging a ſervant to requeſt Sir Robert to indulge him with an audience for a few minutes alone in his library, he ſoon convinced Mr. Middleton, that his purpoſe was not to be ſhaken.

The Baronet returning his compliments, that he ſhould be happy to ſee his gueſt, the

the ſtill anxious apothecary, offered him his aſſiſtance down the ſtairs. Thaddeus needed no help, and gratefully declined it. The exertion neceſſary to be ſummoned for this interview, had imparted as much momentary ſtrength to his frame as to his mind; and though his colour was heightened, he entered the library with a firm ſtep.

Sir Robert met him at the door, and, ſhaking him by the hand, with many warm aſſurances of pleaſure at his recovery, would have led him to a ſeat; but Thaddeus drawing back, only ſupported himſelf againſt the back of it with his hand; whilſt in a ſteady voice, he expreſſed the moſt animated thanks for the benefits he had received; then pauſing, and caſting the proud luſtre of his eyes to the ground, leſt their language ſhould tell all that he thought, he continued, "I have only to regret Sir Robert, that your benevolence has been laviſhed on a man whom you regard with abhorrence. I am that Count Sobieſki, that Polander, whom you commanded your ſon to ſee no more. Reſpecting

ing even the prejudices of my friend's parent, I was haſtening to London, meaning to ſet ſail for America with the firſt ſhip, when I ſwooned on the road. I believe I was nearly expiring; your humanity ſaved me: and I now owe to gratitude, as well as to my own ſatisfaction, the fulfilment of my declaration. I ſhall leave Deerhurſt immediately; and England, as ſoon as I am able to embark."

Thaddeus, with a ſecond bow, and not quite ſo firm a ſtep, without venturing a glance at what he ſuppoſed were the ſhamed looks of the Baronet, was preparing to quit the room, when Sir Robert, with a pale and aghaſt countenance, exclaimed, "Stop!"

Thaddeus looked at him with wonder. The Baronet, incapable of ſaying more, pointed to a chair for him to ſit down; then ſinking into another himſelf, took out his handkerchief, and wiping away the large drops that ſtood on his forehead, breathleſsly panted for reſpiration. At laſt, with a deſperate kind of haſte, he ſaid:

"Was

"Was your mother, Thereſe Sobieſki?"

Thaddeus, ſtill more aſtoniſhed, replied in the affirmative; and Sir Robert threw himſelf back on the chair with a deep groan. Hardly knowing what he did, the Count roſe from his ſeat, and advanced towards him: Sir Robert, hearing his approach, ſtretched out his hand; and, with a look of agony, aſked who was his father? then, without waiting for a reply, hid his convulſed features beneath his handkerchief. The Baronet's agitation, which now ſhook him like an earthquake, had become contagious: Thaddeus gazed at him with a palſying uncertainty working at his heart; and, laying his hand upon his bewildered brain, he anſwered; "I know not. I believe, the Earl of Tinemouth. But here is his picture." With a trembling hand he took the caſe which held it, out of his pocket; and, tearing open the claſps, gave it to Sir Robert, who had ſtarted from his poſition at the name of the Earl. The moment the Baronet's eyes reſted on the miniature, he threw it from

from him, and fell ſenſeleſs back on the chair.

Thaddeus, hardly more alive, ſprinkled ſome water on his face, and with throbbing temples and a beating heart, ſtood in wordleſs expectation over him. Such exceſſive emotion told him, that ſomething more than Sir Robert's hatred of the Polanders had ſtimulated his late conduct; and too earneſt for an explanation, to ring for aſſiſtance, he rejoiced to ſee by the convulſion of the Baronet's features, and the heaving of his cheſt, that animation was returning. In a few minutes he opened his eyes, but when he met the anxious gaze of Thaddeus, he cloſed them as ſuddenly, and riſing from his ſeat, ſtaggered up againſt the chimney-piece, exclaiming, "O God, direct me!"

Thaddeus, whoſe conjectures were now wrought almoſt into mildneſs, followed him, and whilſt his exhauſted frame ſeemed ready to ſink to the earth, implored him to ſpeak.

"O, Sir!"

"O, Sir!" cried he, "If you know any thing about my family? If you know any thing about my father, in pity anſwer me! Or, only tell me; am I ſo wretched as to be the ſon of Lord Tinemouth?"

The violence of the Count's emotions, during this agonizing petition, totally overcame him; before he had finiſhed ſpeaking, his limbs withdrew their ſupport; and, ſinking down on his knees, his head dropped breathleſs againſt the ſide of a chair: Though incapable of ſtanding, his beſeeching and eager eyes were yet riveted on the Baronet's averted face.

Sir Robert turned haſtily round. He ſaw him ſunk, like a beautiful flower, bruiſed and trampled on by the wanton foot of him who had given it root: unable to make any evaſive reply to this laſt appeal of virtue and of nature, he threw himſelf with a burſt of tears upon his neck, and exclaimed, "Wretch that I have been! O, Sobieſki! *I* am thy father. Dear, injured ſon of the unhappy Thereſe!"

The firſt words which carried this avowal to the heart of Thaddeus, deprived it

it of motion; and, when Sir Robert expected to receive the returning embrace of his son, he found him senseless in his arms.

The cries of the Baronet brought Mr. Middleton and the servants into the room. When the former saw the state of the Count, and perceived the agonized position of his patron, (who was supporting and leaning over his son,) the honest man declared, that he expected nothing less from the gentleman's disobedience of his orders. The presence of the servants having recalled Sir Robert's wandering faculties, he desired them to remove Thaddeus to his chamber. Then following them in silence, when they had laid their charge on the bed, he watched, in extreme but concealed anxiety, till Mr. Middleton, by opening a vein, again brought back animation to his patient.

The moment the Count unclosed his eyes, they fixed themselves on the agitated father. He drew the hand which held his, to his lips. The tears of paternal love again bathed the cheeks of Sir Robert;

he felt how warm at his heart was the affection of his deſerted ſon; (and making a ſign for Mr. Middieton to leave the room, who obeyed;) he bent his ſtreaming eyes upon the other hand of Thaddeus, and ſaid in a faultering voice, "Can you pardon me?"

Thaddeus threw himſelf on his father's boſom, and wept profuſely; then raiſing Sir Robert's claſped hands in his, whilſt his eloquent eyes ſeemed to ſearch the heavens, he ſaid, "My dear, dear mother loved you to her lateſt hour; and I have all my mother's heart: whatever may have been your faults, I feel that I love my father."

Sir Robert ſtrained him to his breaſt. After a pauſe, whilſt he ſhook the tears from his ſilver eye-laſhes, he reſumed, "Certain, my dear ſon, that you require repoſe, and aſſured that you will not find it till I have offered ſome apology for my unnatural conduct, I will now explain the various circumſtances which impelled my actions, and drew diſtreſs upon that noble creature, your mother."

Sir

Sir Robert hesitated a moment that he might recover breath, and then went on.

"Keep your situation;" added he, putting down Thaddeus, who at this opening was raising himself up; "I shall tell my melancholy story with less pain, if your eyes be not upon me. I will begin from the first."

The Baronet proceeded to say, That very early in life he had attached himself to Miss Beaufort, the only sister of the late Admiral Beaufort, who was Mary's father; they were then wards of Sir Fulke Somerset. Mr. Beaufort had been in the navy from a boy; but his sister remaining always at the Castle, an affection as strong as it was mutual, took place between herself and her cousin Robert. When the young people applied to Sir Fulke for his consent to their marriage, he refused it on the plea of their youth. In vain the passionate Robert declared the reasonableness and ardour of his affection; his father urged his being only a younger son, and in other ways wholly unworthy of his ward, unless he would consent to undergo

the poliſh of a three years tour over the continent. After much altercation, this arrangement was at length complied with; and Robert and Miſs Beaufort bade each other adieu at the expence of many ſighs and tears. Highly indignant at the unfeeling whim of Sir Fulke; and, provoked with his brother for backing his father's arguments, Robert Somerſet ſet off for Dover, where he was joined by the preſent Earl of Tinemouth, (then Mr. Stanhope,) who was baniſhed the country on the ſame errand: but his was to forget a miſtreſs; Somerſet,'s to deſerve one. Stanhope's mother, and Robert's having been ſiſters, the young men met as relations; mutually enraged at their fathers, (their mothers having been long dead,) they determined to change their names, and to let no one know any thing about them during their travels, except the two women, whom they beſt loved. To this end, as ſoon as they croſſed the channel and had landed in France, they gave themſelves out to be brothers, which their great perſonal reſemblance corroborated, and called themſelves Sackville.

ville. This buſineſs ſettled, they travelled pretty amicably till they reached Naples: Here Mr. Stanhope involved himſelf in a very diſhonourable intrigue with the only daughter of an old Britiſh officer, who had retired to that climate for his health. Somerſet remonſtrated on the villainy of ſeducing an innocent girl, when he knew that his heart and hand were abſolutely devoted to another; and Stanhope, enraged at finding a cenſor in a companion, whom he had conſidered as headſtrong as himſelf, ended the argument by ſtriking him. Somerſet drew his ſword; and it is likely if the ſervants of their hotel had not interfered, the affray would have been terminated with one of their lives. Since that hour, they never met again. Mr. Stanhope left his ſhame, and his wounded friend; and, fearful of conſequences, fled to Palermo. Robert Somerſet, when recovered from his hurts, (ſtill retaining the name of Sackville,) took the way to Florence, in which beautiful city, determining to ſtay ſome time, he rather ſought than repelled the civilities of the inhabi-

tants. Here he became acquainted with the Palatine, and the lovely Thereſe, whoſe affections he ſo completely won. Soon after this intimacy commenced, Miſs Beaufort ceaſed to anſwer his letters. Almoſt deſperate with his fears, he was on the point of going to England, when he received a packet from home. On opening it, he found a letter from Miſs Beaufort, wherein ſhe informed him, that having long conſidered their attachment as a childiſh entanglement, ſhe had tried to wean him from his former folly, by continuing an obſtinate ſilence. Having hardly a doubt that ſhe had ſucceeded, ſhe now broke through her reſolution, as it was to ſhew him at once, the unreaſonableneſs of making ſuch early engagements. Soon after his departure, a journey up to town taught her to know her own heart; and, in conſequence, ſhe had yielded her hand to Mr. Somerſet, his elder brother. He had always been averſe to her marriage with Robert. This ſhameleſs declaration was ended by a long homily of advice againſt ſimilar fetters —and the inſult, of ſubſcribing herſelf his

" affectionate

" affectionate ſiſter," &c. On the receipt of this ſtab to all his hopes, he forſwore his family for ever, and flying to Thereſe Sobieſki, in a paroxyſm of madneſs and revenge, married her. This raſh act perpetrated, he in vain ſought for tranquillity; he ſaw that ſhe idolized him, but his thoughts were always fixed on his ungrateful Mary; were always deploring her lightneſs, and execrating the perfidy of his brother. In this temper a ſecond packet found him. Again he ſaw Miſs Beaufort's hand-writing, but he dropt it with horror into the envelope, and tore open the black ſeal which was affixed to a letter from his father. Here, Sir Fulke confeſſed ſuch a plan of deceit as petrified his ſon. He declared, that all which had paſſed, was deviſed by Mr. Somerſet, in hopes of tempting him to revenge the affront that Mary had put on him, by a haſty marriage. The wretched old man, with many prayers for pardon, acknowledged that this bitter confeſſion was wrung from him by the ſudden death of his eldeſt ſon, who now lay a corpſe in the houſe. The diſconſolate

father having related the particulars of Mr. Somerſet's death, (which happened after three days illneſs,) added, that it was in compliance with his entreaties to preſerve Miſs Beaufort for him, that he had agreed to drive Robert from the kingdom. To further the ſcheme, of making the ſeparation for ever, he had intercepted all their mutual letters; and, Mr. Somerſet himſelf, had forged that one in Miſs Beaufort's name, which carried the intelligence of their union. By the ſame means, a ſimilar effect was wrought upon the abuſed Mary; believing Robert unfaithful, ſhe fell into a melancholy, and evinced a careleſſneſs to exterior objects, which they hoped, might in time induce her through mere weakneſs of mind, to give her hand to the perſecuting paſſion of Mr. Somerſet. "But," continued Sir Fulke, "death has put an end to this unnatural rivalry; and my poor girl undeceived in her opinion of you, pants to ſee you, and to give you that hand, which my ill-fated ſon, and your unhappy father, ſo unjuſtly detained."

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On the receipt of this packet, with a ſoul divided between love, humanity, and honour, Robert Somerſet ſacrificed all to his paſſions. He adored the woman on whoſe account he had left his country; and, though every tie of heaven and earth bound him to his deceived and injured wife, he conſigned her to the full horrors of ſuch deſertion, and haſtened to England.

"Shameful to relate," added Sir Robert, "immediately on my landing, I married Mary Beaufort. In her arms, I forgot for a while, Thereſe and her agonies. But when my dear Pembroke firſt ſaw the light, when I preſt him to my heart, it ſeemed as if at the ſame inſtant I had ſtabbed it with a dagger. When I would have breathed a bleſſing over him, the conviction ſtruck me, that I durſt not; that I had deluded the mother who gave him birth; and that at ſome future period, he might have cauſe to curſe the author of his exiſtence. Well," continued the Baronet, wiping his forehead, "though the birth of this boy had conjured up the image of

your mother, which haunted me day and night; I never could ſummon courage to inquire reſpecting her fate. When the troubles of Poland commenced, what a dreadful apprehenſion ſeized me! The ſucceſs of the Ruſſians, and the conſequent diſtreſſes of the nobility, overwhelmed me with fear: I knew not, but they might be forced like the French nobleſſe, to fly their country; and the bare idea of meeting your grandfather or the injured Thereſe in England, precipitated me into ſuch a ſeries of apprehenſions, as nearly menaced my life. I became melancholy and ill; I avoided the ſight of the newſpapers; and, as far as I could, (under the plea of the ſtory which you have heard,) I withheld my family from ſpeaking on a ſubject which manifeſtly gave me pain. But I could not prevent the tongues of our viſitors diſcourſing on a theme which at that period intereſted every thinking mind. I heard of the valiant Koſciuſzko, the good Staniſlaus, and the Palatine Sobieſki with his brave grandſon, ſpoken of in the ſame breath. I durſt not ſurmiſe who this

grandſon

grandſon was; I durſt not aſk; I dreaded to know. At length," added he, quickening his voice, "the idol of my heart, ſhe for whom I had perhaps ſacrificed my eternal peace, died in my arms! I received the ſhock as became a chriſtian: I bent beneath the blow with humility; for I embraced it as the expiation of a crime, which till then, even in the midſt of my felicity, had ſat on my ſoul like the hand of death. I bore this trial with reſignation. But, when two years after, my eye fell by accident upon the name of Sobieſki, in one of the public papers, I could not withdraw it again; my ſight was faſcinated as if by a rattleſnake; and, in one column I read, how bravely the Palatine fell; and, in the next, the dreadful fate of his daughter. She was revenged!" cried Sir Robert, eagerly graſping the hand of Thaddeus, who could not reſtrain the groan which burſt from his breaſt. "I was deprived of that reaſon, which had abuſed her noble nature, for near three months afterwards. When I recovered my ſenſes," conttinued he after a

pauſe; "and found that I had ſo fatally ſuffered the time of reſtitution to go by, I began to torment myſelf, that I had not on the death of Lady Somerſet, immediately haſtened to Poland, and entreated Thereſe's pardon on my knees. This period of vivid remorſe was ſoon terminated, by the ſame arguments which on the firſt year of my wife's loſs, had deterred me from being juſt. I re-conſidered, that the Counteſs Sobieſki having had a prior claim to my name, ſuch reſtitution on my part, muſt in conſequence have illegitimized my darling Pembroke. It was this horrid conviction," exclaimed Sir Robert, a ſudden diſtraction agitating his before affectionate eye, "that cauſed all my cruelty to you. When my dear ſon deſcribed the danger from which you had reſcued him; when he told me, that Thereſe had foſtered him with a mother's tenderneſs; I was probed to the heart: but when he added, that the young Count Sobieſki was now an alien from his country, and relying on my friendſhip for a home, my terror was too truly manifeſted. Horror

drove all natural remorſe from my ſoul. I thought an avenging power had ſent my deſerted child to diſcover his father, to claim his rights, and to publiſh me as a villain: and when I ſaw my innocent ſon, even on his knees, petitioning for the man whom I believed was come to undo him, I became almoſt frantic. Under this temper," added he, putting the trembling hand of Thaddeus to his ſtreaming eyes, "I drove out my firſt born, to be a guiltleſs wanderer on the face of the earth; not for his own crimes, but for thoſe of his father: and heaven puniſhed my injuſtice. When I thought the evidence of my ſhame, divided from me by an inſeparable barrier; when I believed that the ocean would ſoon ſeparate me from all my fears, a righteous providence brought thee before my eyes, forlorn and expiring. It was the ſon of Thereſe Sobieſki that I had expoſed to ſuch wretchedneſs! It was the darling of her heart, that I had conſigned to the beating elements! O, Thaddeus," cried he, "can I be forgiven for this?"

Thaddeus,

Thaddeus lulled the wakeful remorſe of his venerable father, with ſuch kind arguments of excuſe for his conduct, as at leaſt imported to him, a conſoling aſſurance in the generous affection of his ſon.

When this long and intereſting converſation had terminated, Sir Robert well remembering the violent effects of Mr. Somerſet's grief at Sobieſki's flight and declared abjuration of England; pardoned his ſon the outrageous reproaches which had driven him from his own houſe, and very joyfully diſpatched a meſſenger to deſire his immediate preſence at Deerhurſt.

CHAP. VIII.

THAT ſickneſs, which is the conſequence of mental pain, uſually vaniſhes with its cauſe. Long before the evening of the enſuing day, Thaddeus had quitted his chamber, and related to his father the rapid incidents of his brief and eventful career. The voice of Fame had already blazoned him abroad, as "*the plume of war, with early laurels crowned;*" but it was left to his own eloquent tongue, to prove with all the pathos of modeſty and feeling, that the moſt deſperate conflicts are not thoſe which we ſuſtain in the field.

Sir Robert liſtened to him with affection, admiration, and delight. He was anſwering the intereſting detail, with many grateful apoſtrophes to that Providence which had crowned his old age with par-

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don and peace, when a servant opened the door, and announced that Mr. Somerset was in the library.

Thaddeus instantly rose; but Sir Robert put him down again. "Remain here, my dear son," said he, "till I apprise your brother how nearly you are related to him. That door leads into my study; I will call you in when he is prepared?"

The moment Sir Robert joined Pembroke, he read in his pale and harassed countenance how much he required the intelligence which he came to communicate. Mr. Somerset bowed coldly on his father's entrance, and begged to be honoured with his commands.

"They are what I expect will restore you to your usual looks and manner, my dear boy," answered his father, taking his passive hand, and seating him by him; "so attend to me."

Pembroke listened to the beginning of the Baronet's narrative with respectful attention; but when the name of Therese Sobieski was mentioned as the woman whom he had married and deserted; the

ready

ready apprehenſion of his ſon conceiving the reſt, he had only to affirm his eager demand, that Thaddeus was indeed his brother. Pembroke looked wildly around him.

"O, my father!" cried he, "what have you done? Where is he? For what have you ſacrificed him?"

"Hear me to an end," rejoined the Baronet, who, then, in as few words as poſſible, repeated the conſequent events, with the recent meeting.

Pembroke's tranſports were now as high as his deſpair had been deep. He threw himſelf on his father's breaſt; he aſked for his friend, his brother; and begged to be conducted to him wherever he was. Sir Robert did no more than open the door which divided the library from the dining-room, and in one moment the brothers were firmly locked in each other's arms.

Their father, with a ſpeechleſs tongue, but an eloquent heart, ſtood over them with uplifted hands, invoking the ſpirits of their

their beatified mothers, to behold this heavenly ſcene.

The feelings of the young men for a long time denied them words, but their eyes, their tears, and their united hands, imparted to each breaſt a conſciouſneſs of mutual love unutterable, if not to be expreſſed by thoſe looks which are indeed the trueſt heralds of the ſoul.

Sir Robert wept like an infant whilſt contemplating theſe two affectionate brothers; in a faultering voice, he exclaimed, "How ſoon may theſe plighted hands be ſeparated by the harpies of the law! Alas, Pembroke, you cannot be ignorant that I buy this ſon at the price of your legitimacy!"

At this ſpeech of his father's, the blood ruſhed over the ingenuous cheek of Pembroke; but Thaddeus turning inſtantly to Sir Robert, ſaid, with a ſmile,

"On this head, I truſt neither my father nor my brother will entertain one thought to trouble them. Had I even the inclination to act otherwiſe than right, my revered grandfather has put it out of my

my power to bear any other name than that of Sobieſki. He made me ſwear never to change it; and, as I hope to meet him hereafter," added he, with ſolemnity, "I will obey him! Therefore, my beloved father, it is only in ſecret that I can enjoy the conviction that I am your ſon, and Pembroke's brother: yet, the happineſs which I have received with the knowledge that I am ſo, will ever live here; will ever animate my heart with gratitude to Heaven and you."

"Noble ſon of the ſainted Thereſe!" cried Sir Robert, "I do not deſerve thee?"

"How ſhall I merit your care of my honour? of my deareſt feelings?" exclaimed Pembroke, preſſing the hands of his brother to his heart, "I can do nothing, deareſt Thaddeus. I am a bankrupt in the means of evincing what is paſſing in my ſoul. My mother's chaſte ſpirit thanks you from my lips; yet I will not abuſe your generoſity; though I retain the name of Somerſet, it ſhall be only the

the name; the inheritance entailed on my father's eldeſt ſon belongs to you."

Whilſt Thaddeus embraced his brother with affection, he calmly and firmly replied, that he would rather encounter all the probable miſeries from which his father's benevolence had ſaved him, than rob his brother of any part of what he believed to be juſtly his due.

Sir Robert, with anguiſhed delight, attempted to ſtop this generous contention, by ſaying that it ſhould be terminated by an equal diviſion of his eſtates.

"Not ſo, my dear father," replied Thaddeus; "I will never conſent that the title of Somerſet ſhall want wealth to ſupport the munificence of its poſſeſſor."

After a few more arguments, of the ſame tendency, the controverſy being ſettled, the remainder of the evening paſſed in that ſweet reciprocity of confidence and peace, which the imagination can beſt picture.

According to the deciſions of this night, Sir Robert wrote next morning to his ſiſter, informing her, that accident had introduced

introduced Pembroke's friend, the Count Sobieſki, to his preſence; when, to his amazement, and joy, he diſcovered, that this celebrated young hero, though of a nation to which he had declared an abhorrence, was the only remaining branch of a family, to which he had owed unnumbered obligations. He added, that five-and-twenty years ago, having contracted an immenſe debt with the Palatine of Maſovia, he had, as a ſmall compenſation, ſigned over to the Count, (who would now reſume all the honours of his rank,) the houſe and eſtates of Deerhurſt, to the amount of three thouſand a year. He cloſed his letter, with many expreſſions of impatience to preſent to his ſiſter and niece, their intereſting *emigré* under a character which reflected honour on their eſteem.

This epiſtle was put into the hands of Mrs. Dorothy, by an out-rider, as ſhe was following Miſs Beaufort and Lady Albina Stanhope into the travelling coach. Mrs. Dorothy having ſeated herſelf, read it aloud to both the young ladies; at every

every welcome word, the amazed and overjoyed Mary felt her throbbing heart dropping tears of bliſs and gratitude. The good old lady was not backward in demonſtrating aſtoniſhment. Surpriſed at her brother's rencountre with Thaddeus, but more at his avowal of obligations to any of that nation about whom he had always aſſerted directly the reverſe; ſhe was ſo immerſed in wonder and pleaſure, that her ever-cheerful tongue, clothing itſelf in unaccuſtomed volubility, entertained the attentive Lady Albina all the way to Somerſet, with the public, as well as private hiſtory, of the Count Sobieſki.

When the carriage arrived at Deerhurſt, it was paſt midnight; and, to the no ſmall diſappointment of the ladies, the family had been retired to bed above an hour. Mrs. Dorothy, who would not ſuffer her brother to be diſturbed, having ordered the girls to their rooms, was croſſing one of the galleries to her own apartment, when a door opening, Pembroke, in his night-gown and ſlippers, looked

looked out. He had heard a buſtle, and was going to enquire the reaſon, juſt as his aunt appeared. She kiſſed him, bade him good night, told him to prepare for ſomething pleaſing in the morning; and, ſmiling, hurried on to her chamber.

Pembroke had thought ſo little of Mrs. Dorothy's lively promiſe, that he was almoſt the laſt who deſcended to the breakfaſt-parlour. Mrs. Dorothy reproached him for his undutiful lazineſs; but Miſs Beaufort, with an anxious conſciouſneſs glowing on her cheek, embraced her couſin, who whiſpered, "Now, I ſhall ſee the two deareſt friends I poſſeſs happy in each other."

Mary's vivid bluſh had not ſubſided, when the ſudden entrance of Thaddeus, and his agitated bow, overſpread her neck and boſom with crimſon. A dimneſs ſeemed to obſcure her faculties: ſhe hardly heard the animated words of Sir Robert, whilſt he preſented him as the Count Sobieſki, the darling ſon of one who had deſerved the higheſt place in his heart. Whatever he was, ſhe felt that he was

lord

lord of hers; and withdrawing her hand haſtily from the timid and thrilling touch of him ſhe would have lingered near forever; ſhe glided back towards an open caſement, where the freſh air helped to diſpel the faintneſs which had ſeized her.

After Mrs. Dorothy, with all the urbanity of her nature, had declared her welcomes to the Count, ſhe put away the coffee that was handed to her by Pembroke, and ſaid with a ſmile, "Before I taſte my breakfaſt, I muſt inform you, Sir Robert, that you have a gueſt in this houſe you little expect. I forbade Mary ſaying a word, becauſe, as we are told that "*the firſt tellers of unwelcome news have but a loſing office;*" *vice verſa*, I hoped for a *gaining* one; therefore detained ſuch a pleaſing piece of intelligence for my own promulgation. Indeed, I doubt, whether or no it will not intoxicate ſome folks here," added ſhe, glancing archly on Pembroke, who had looked ſuddenly round at this whimſical declaration; "ſuffice it to ſay, that yeſterday morning Lady Albina Stanhope,

more

more dead than alive, accompanied by her maid, arrived in a poſt-chaiſe at Somerſet Caſtle, and implored our protection as relations. Our dear Mary embraced the poor weeping young creature, who, amidſt many tears, recapitulated the horrors ſhe had ſuffered, ſince ſhe parted with the Count Sobieſki at the Abbey. The lateſt outrage of her cruel father, was his immediate marriage with the vile Lady Sophia Lovel; and his commands, that Lady Albina would treat her as became a daughter. Ill as her ladyſhip was, when ſhe received theſe diſgraceful orders, ſhe determined to eſcape them and the degradation they would otherwiſe caſt on the memory of her own mother, by inſtantly quitting home, To this end ſhe engaged her maid to aſſiſt her flight; '*and*,' added ſhe. '*where was I to go? Who would receive the unfortunate victim of the profligate Lady Sophia? I could think of none ſo likely as the father of the generous Mr. Somerſet. He told me we were relations; I beſeech you to be my friends!*' As I am ſenſible your benevolent heart, my dear

brother," continued Mrs Dorothy, "would have dictated the same, I stopped this sweet girl's petition with my caresses, and promised her a kinder father in Sir Robert Somerset."

"You did right, Dorothy," returned the Baronet, "though the Earl and I must ever be strangers, I have no enmity against his children. Where is this amiable Lady Albina?"

Mrs. Dorothy informed him, that in consequence of her recent grief and ill-treatment, her ladyship had found herself too unwell to rise with the family; but she would hope to join them at noon.

Pembroke was indeed deeply interested in this intelligence. The simple graces of the lovely Albina had, on the first interview, penetrated his heart. Her sufferings at Harrowby, and the sensibility which her ingenuous nature exhibited without affectation or disguise, had left her image in his soul, long after she disappeared. He now gave the reins to his eager imagination,

gination, and was the firſt in the ſaloon, to greet his lovely miſtreſs.

Sir Robert Somerſet welcomed her with the warmth of a parent: but his animated and enraptured ſon broke out into the moſt vehement expreſſions of joy, which ſhe received with timid and grateful bows.

During this ſcene, Miſs Beaufort, no longer able to bear the reſtraint of company, nor even the accidental glances of Sobieſki, (whoſe preſence, dear as it was, diſconcerted and oppreſſed her,) walked out into the park. Though it was the month of October, the weather continued fine. A bright ſun tempered the air, and gilded the yellow leaves which the freſh wind drove before her in a thouſand glittering eddies. This was Mary's favourite ſeaſon. She found its ſoftneſs diffuſe the pureſt melancholy over her ſoul. The rugged form of care ſeems to diſſolve under the magic touch of beautiful Nature. Forgetful of the world's anxieties, the tranquillizing ſpirit of meditation ſhades the heart of ſorrow with a veil, which might well be

called the twilight of the mind; and the entranced ſoul, happy in deluſion, half cloſes its bright eye, reluctant to perceive that ſuch ſweet repoſe reſts in error.

Such were the reflections of Mary after her diſturbed thoughts had toſſed themſelves in a ſea of doubts, relative to the intereſt ſhe might probably poſſeſs in the heart of Sobieſki. Wearied out with ſuſpence, ſhe reſolved to reſign her future fate to Providence; and, turning her gaze on the lovely objects around, ſoon found the genius of the ſeaſon abſorb her wholly. Her cheek glowed, her eyes became humid, and caſting their mild radiance on the fading flowers beneath, ſhe purſued her way through a cloud of fragrance. It was the laſt breath of the expiring year. Love is full of imagination. Mary eaſily glided from the earth's departing charms, to her own waning beauty: the chord once touched, every note reviberated: and hope and fear, joy and regret, again diſpoſſeſſed her late acquired ſerenity.

It being near three o'clock, Lady Albina having expreſſed a wiſh to walk out

out in ſearch of Miſs Beaufort, the two brothers offered their attendance. Before her ladyſhip had paſſed through the firſt park, ſhe complained of fatigue; Pembroke, alarmed, urged her to enter a ſhepherd's hut cloſe by, whilſt the Count Sobieſki would proceed alone in queſt of his couſin.

Thaddeus, with a beating heart undertook this commiſſion; and bounding over the ruſtic bridge which croſſed the Witham, haſtened along the neareſt dell. With the lightneſs of a young hunter, he mounted the heights, deſcended to the vallies, traverſed one woody nook, and then another, but could ſee no trace of Miſs Beaufort. Almoſt induced to ſuppoſe ſhe had returned to the houſe, he was ſlackening his pace to abandon the ſearch, when he caught a glimpſe of her figure as ſhe turned the corner of a thicket leading to the terrace above. In an inſtant he was at her ſide; with a faultering voice, his hat in his hand, his boſom panting, and cheek glowing with confuſion, he repeated his errand.

Mary blushed, trembled, and was alarmed at finding herself alone with Thaddeus. Though he now stood before her in a quality which she had ever believed was his right, yet remembrance of what had passed between them, when in other circumstances, confounded and overwhelmed her. When Constantine was poor and unfriended, it was delicious to pity and to love him. When the same Constantine appeared as a man of rank, invested with a splendid fortune, and extensive fame, she felt lost, annihilated. The cloud which had obscured, not extinguished his glory, was dispersed. He was that Sobieski whom she had admired unseen; he was that Constantine whom she had loved unknown; he was that Sobieski, that Constantine, who, seen and known, she now adored.

Weighed down by the weight of these reflections, she only bowed to what he said; and gathering her cloak from the winds which blew it a round her, was hurrying

rying with downward eyes to the ſtairs of the terrace, when her foot ſlipping, ſhe muſt have fallen, had not Thaddeus caught her on his arm. She roſe from it with a face bluſhing like ſcarlet; and that colour did not recede, when ſhe found that he had not relinquiſhed her hand. Her heart ſwelled, her head became giddy, her feet trembled; and finding that after a ſlight motion of her arm, he ſtill held it faſt; nearly overcome by inexplicable diſtreſs, ſhe turned away her face to conceal its confuſion.

Thaddeus ſaw all this; and, with a fluttering hope, inſtead of ſurrendering that hand which he had retained, he made it yet a cloſer priſoner, by graſping it in both his; and, preſſing it earneſtly to his breaſt, ſaid, in a hurried voice, whilſt his eloquent eyes poured all their beams upon her averted cheek, "Surely, Miſs Beaufort will not deny me the deareſt happineſs I poſſeſs? The privilege of gratitude to her."

He pauſed: His ſoul was too full for utterance; and raiſing Mary's hand from

his heart to his lips, he kiſſed it fervently. Almoſt fainting, Miſs Beaufort ſtruggled to withdraw it; and leaning her head, which ſhe was now unable to ſupport, againſt a tree of the thicket where they were ſtanding, waved her releaſed hand, in ſign for him to leave her.

Such extraordinary agitation palſied all the warm and bliſsful emotions of the Count. Dreading that he had offended her, that ſhe might ſuppoſe he had preſumed on her kindneſs; he ſtood for a moment in ſilent aſtoniſhment; then dropping on his knee, (hardly conſcious of doing ſo,) caught hold of her cloak; with an energy of action and voice, which ſpoke more impetuoſity of feeling, than for a long time he had ſuffered to eſcape his heart; he implored her pardon, for what had paſſed.

"Forgive me," added he, with encreaſed earneſtneſs; "forgive me, in juſtice to your own virtues. I meant only to thank you for your goodneſs to an unfortunate exile; but if my words or manner have obeyed the more fervid impulſe

pulſe of my ſoul, and declared aloud, what is its glory in ſecret; blame my nature, moſt reſpected Miſs Beaufort, not my preſumption. I have not dared to look ſteadily on any aim, higher than your eſteem."

Mary knew not how to conſider this addreſs. The poſition in which he uttered it, his countenance, when ſhe turned to anſwer him, were both declarative of ſomething leſs equivocal than his ſpeech. He was ſtill graſping the drapery of her cloak; and his eyes, from which the wind blew back his fine hair, were beaming upon her, full of that piercing tenderneſs which at once diſſolves and ſeizes the ſoul.

She paſſed her hand over her own eyes; with an attempt at ſelf-command, ſhe begged him to riſe, and inſtinctively held out her hand to aſſiſt him; he obeyed, and ſhe continued, "You have done nothing, my Lord, to offend me. I was only fearful that my conduct—what I had done to ſerve you as a perſon my aunt eſteemed, might have leſſened

me—might have led you to imagine, that I would not have acted the same part by any man in such circumstances."

Every emotion which faultered on the tongue of Mary, met an answering pang in the breast of Thaddeus. Fearing that he had set his heart on the possession of a a treasure totally out of his reach, he knew not how high had been his hope, till he now felt the depth of his disappointment. He suffered the hand of Miss Beaufort to drop; and taking up his hat, which lay on the grass, with a countenance from which every gleam of joy had vanished, he bowed respectfully; and, in a low tone, replied, "Having the dependent situation in which I appeared at Lady Dundas's ever before my eyes, I had not the folly to suppose, that any lady could then notice my misfortunes, influenced by any other consideration than her humanity. That I excited this humanity, where alone I was proud to awaken it, was in those hours of dejection my sole comfort: It consoled me for the friends I had lost; it repaid me for the honours, which

which were no more. But that is paſt! Seeing no farther cauſe for compaſſion, you deem the deluſion no longer neceſſary. Since you will not allow me any individual diſtinction in having attracted your benevolence, though I am to aſcribe all to a charity as diffuſed as effective; yet I muſt ever acknowledge, with the deepeſt gratitude, that I owe my preſent home and happineſs, to Miſs Beaufort. Farther than this, I ſhall never preſume."

Theſe words, ſhifted all the Count's anguiſh to Mary's breaſt. She perceived the offended delicacy which actuated every ſyllable as they fell; and, fearful of having incurred their reproof, by her cold and haughty reply, ſhe opened her lips to ſay ſomething that might better explain what ſhe meant; but her heart failing her, ſhe cloſed them again, and continued to walk in ſilence by his ſide. Having allowed the opportunity to eſcape, ſhe believed all hopes of exculpation to be at an end; and, not daring to look up, ſhe took a laſt deſpairing glance at Sobieſki's graceful figure as he walked

near her. His arms were folded, his hat pulled over his forehead, and his long dark eye-laſhes ſhading his downward eyes, imparted a dejection to his whole air, which wrapped her weeping heart round and round with regretful pangs. "Ah!" thought ſhe, "though the offspring of but one moment, they will prey on my peace for ever."

At the turning of a little wooded knoll, this ſilent and penſive pair heard the ſound of ſome one on the other ſide, walking faſtly through the heaps of dried leaves. In a minute after, Sir Robert Somerſet approached them.

Whilſt his father advanced ſmiling towards him, Thaddeus attempted to diſpel the gloom of his countenance; but not ſucceeding, he bowed abruptly to the agitated Mary; and haſtily ſaid, "I will leave Miſs Beaufort in your protection, Sir; and go myſelf to ſee whether or not Lady Albina be recovered from her fatigue."

"I thought

"I thought to find you all together." returned Sir Robert; "Where is her ladyſhip?"

I left her with Pembroke in a hut by the river." ſaid Thaddeus, and bowing again, he hurried away, whilſt his father called after him to return in a few minutes and accompany him in a walk.

This immediate deſertion of Sobieſki, when he had come expreſsly to attend her to Lady Albina, nearly overwhelmed Miſs Beaufort's before exhauſted ſpirits: hardly knowing whether to remain or to retreat, ſhe was attempting the latter, when her uncle caught her by the arm.

"Stay!" cried he, "why Mary, you ſurely would not leave me quite alone?"

Mary's tears had guſhed over her eyes the moment her back was turned; and as Sir Robert drew her towards him, to his extreme amazement he ſaw that ſhe was weeping. At a ſight ſo unexpected, the ſmile of hilarity left his lips. Putting his arm tenderly round her waiſt, (for now that her diſtreſs had diſcovered itſelf, her agitation

agitation became so great that she could hardly stand,) he enquired in an affectionate voice, what had afflicted her?

She only answered by her sobs; till finding it impossible to break away from her uncle's arms, she hid her face in his bosom, and gave a loose to the full tide of her tears.

Sir Robert, recollecting the strange haste in which Thaddeus had hurried from them; and remembering Miss Beaufort's generosity to him in town, followed by her succeeding melancholy; at once united these circumstances with her present confusion; and conceiving an instantaneous suspicion of the reality, pressed her with redoubled affection to his bosom.

"I fear, my dearest girl," said he, that something disagreeable has happened between you and the Count Sobieski? Perhaps he has offended you? Perhaps he has found my sweet Mary too amiable?"

Miss Beaufort, alarmed at this supposition; after a short struggle, answered, "O no Sir! It is I who have offended him.

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He thinks that I pride myſelf on the inſignificant ſervices which I rendered to him in London."

This reply convinced the Baronet, that he had not been premature in his judgment; and, with a new born delight ſpringing in his ſoul, he inquired why ſhe thought ſo? Had ſhe given him any reaſon to believe ſo?

Mary trembled at ſaying more. Dreading that every word ſhe might utter, would betray how highly ſhe prized the Count's eſteem; ſhe faultered, heſitated, ſtopped. Sir Robert put the queſtion a ſecond time in different terms.

"My loved Mary," ſaid he, ſeating her by him on the trunk of a tree which had been newly felled, "I am ſincerely anxious that you and this young nobleman ſhould regard each other as friends: he is very dear to me; and you cannot doubt, my ſweet girl, my affection for yourſelf. Tell me therefore the cauſe of this little miſunderſtanding?"

Miſs Beaufort took courage at the kindneſs of this ſpeech. Drying her glowing eyes,

eyes, though ſtill concealing them with a handkerchief, ſhe replied in a firmer voice; "I believe, Sir, that the fault lies totally on my ſide. The Count Sobieſki met me on the terrace, and thanked me for what I had done for him. I acted very weakly; I was confuſed. Indeed, I know not what he ſaid; but he fell upon his knees, and I became ſo diſconcerted, ſo frightened, of his having attributed my behaviour to indelicacy or forwardneſs, that I anſwered ſomething which offended him. And I am ſure, he now thinks me inhuman and proud."

Sir Robert kiſſed her throbbing forehead, as ſhe ended this rapid and hardly articulate explanation.

"Tell me candidly, my deareſt Mary!" ſaid he, "Can you believe that a man of Sobieſki's diſpoſition, would kneel to a woman whom he did not both reſpect and love? Simple gratitude, my dear girl, is not ſo earneſt. You have ſaid enough to convince me, whatever be your ſentiments, that you are the miſtreſs of his fate: and, if he ſhould mention

mention it to me, may I tell him the ſcene which has now paſſed between us? May I tell him, that its juſt inference, would requite his tenderneſs with more than your thanks and beſt wiſhes?"

Sir Robert ended the ſentence in a gay tone; but Mary, whoſe nice ſenſibility could not follow her uncle to his ſanguine concluſion; looked modeſtly down, and with a half ſuppreſſed ſigh, anſwered; "I will not deny that I eſteem the Count Sobieſki. I admired his character before I ſaw him: and when I ſaw him, although ignorant that it was he, my reſpect encreaſed. Yet, I never have aſpired to any ſhare in his heart, or even his remembrance: I could not have the preſumption. Therefore, my dear uncle," added ſhe, laying her trembling hand on his arm, and directing her fluctuating eyes to his face, "I beſeech you, as you value my feelings, my peace of mind! never to breathe a ſyllable of my folly to him. I think," added ſhe, claſping her hands with energy, and forgetting the force of her expreſſion, "I would

would ſooner ſuffer death than loſe his eſteem."

"And yet," inquired Sir Robert, "you will at ſome future period give your hand to another man?"

Mary, who did not conſider the extent of this inſidious queſtion, anſwered with fervour, "Never.—I never can be happier than I am." added ſhe, with breathleſs haſte, ſeeing by the ſmile on Sir Robert's lips, that far more had been declared by her manner, than the words intended. Fearful of betraying herſelf farther, ſhe begged permiſſion to retire to the houſe.

The Baronet, now looking very ſerious, took her hand; and reſeating her by him, ſaid, "No, my deareſt Mary; you ſhall not leave me, unleſs you honeſtly avow what are your true ſentiments of the Count Sobieſki. You know, my ſweet girl, that I have tried to make you regard me as a father; to induce you to receive from my love, the treble affection of your deceaſed parents and my lamented wife? If

my

my Mary do not deny this, ſhe cannot treat me with reſerve?"

Miſs Beaufort was unable to reſtrain her tears. Sir Robert continued.

"I will not overwhelm your delicacy by repeating the inquiry, whether I have miſtaken the ſource of your recent emotion; only allow me to beſtow ſome encouragement on the Count's attachment, ſhould he claim my ſervices in its behalf?"

Mary put her uncle's hand to her lips, and kiſſed it, whilſt her dropping tears fell on it; and then replied in a timid voice; "I ſhould be a monſter of ingratitude, could I hide any thing from you, my deareſt Sir, after all this kindneſs! I confeſs, that I do eſteem the Count Sobieſki more than any being on earth. Who could ſee and know him, and feel it poſſible to regard another?"

"And you ſhall be his! my darling Mary!" cried the Baronet, mingling his own bliſful tears with her's; "I had once hoped to have contrived an attachment between

between you and Pembroke, but heaven has decreed it better. When you and Thaddeus are united, I ſhall be happy; I may then die in peace."

Mary ſighed heavily. She could not participate in her uncle's rapture. She thought that ſhe had inſulted and diſguſted the Count by her late behaviour; and was opening her lips to urge it again, when the object of their converſation appeared at a little diſtance coming towards them. Full of renewed trepidation, ſhe burſt from the Baronet's hand; and taking to flight, left her uncle to meet Sobieſki alone.

Sir Robert's anxious queſtion, received a more rapid reply from Thaddeus, than had proceeded from the reluctant Miſs Beaufort. The animated gratitude of Sobieſki; the ardent, yet reſpectful manner with which he declared her eminence above all other women, ſoon convinced the Baronet, that Mary's retreating delicacy had miſinformed her. A complete explanation was the conſequence; and Thaddeus, who had not been more ſanguine

guine in his hopes than his lovely miſtreſs; allowed the clouds over his ſunny eyes to diſappear.

Sir Robert, impatient to ſee theſe two beings, ſo dear to his heart, repoſe confidently in each other's affection; the moment he returned to the houſe, aſked his ſiſter for Miſs Beaufort. Mrs. Dorothy having replied, that ſhe had ſeen her about half an hour ago retire to her own apartments, the Baronet ſent a ſervant up ſtairs, to beg that ſhe would meet him in the library.

This meſſage found Mary in a paroxyſm of diſtreſs. She reproached herſelf for her imprudence, her temerity, her unwomanly conduct, in having given away her heart to a man who had never ſeemed to require it. She remembered that her weakneſs, not her ſincerity, had betrayed this humiliating ſecret to Sir Robert; and, nearly at her wit's end, with a beating heart, ſhe was traverſing the room, almoſt hoping ſhe was in a miſerable dream, when her maid entered with the Baronet's commands.

Diſdaining herſelf, and determining to regain ſome portion of her own reſpect, by ſteadily oppoſing all her uncle's deluding hopes; with an aſſumed ſerenity ſhe arrived at the ſtudy door. She laid her hand on the lock, but the moment it yielded to her touch, all her firmneſs vaniſhed; and trembling and pale as death, ſhe appeared before him.

Sir Robert having ſupported her to a chair; with the tendereſt and moſt delicate expreſſions of paternal love, repeated to her the ſum of his converſation with the Count. Mary was almoſt wild at this diſcourſe. She dreaded that the firſt propoſal of their union had come from her uncle; and, burying her agitated face in her hands, exclaimed, "O Sir! I fear that you have for ever made me deſpicable in my own eyes; that you have told the Count Sobieſki how weak I have been?"

Sir Robert tried to aſſure her, that ſhe alarmed herſelf without a cauſe; but ſhe would not, ſhe could not be pacified; ſhe believed that her tenderneſs and delicacy had

had been made a raſh ſacrifice; and was ſitting gloomily weeping on a window-ſeat, when the Baronet gently added, "Well Mary, ſince I cannot prevail over this ſtrange incredulity, I will call in a more powerful pleader."

He roſe and opened the door which led to the dining-room. Miſs Beaufort inſtantly got up, and flying to the oppoſite door, would have retreated, had not Sir Robert ſuddenly thrown himſelf in her way. He threw his arm about her waiſt, and turning her round, ſhe ſaw the Count who had entered, ſtanding and regarding her with an anxiety which covered her before pale features, with bluſhes.

His father bid him come near. Sobieſki immediately obeyed, though with a ſtep that expreſſed how reluctant he was, to oppreſs the woman whom he ſo deeply loved. Mary's face was now hidden in her uncle's boſom. Sir Robert put her almoſt lifeleſs hand into that of his ſon; who dropping on his knee, ſaid in an agitated voice, "Deareſt Miſs Beaufort, do you

you really recal thoſe cruel words which you directed to me this morning? May I indulge myſelf in the idea, that I am bleſſed with your eſteem?"

Mary could not reply, but whiſpered to her uncle, "Pray Sir, deſire the Count to riſe! I am already ſufficiently overwhelmed."

"My ſweet Mary!" returned the Baronet preſſing her in his arms; "this is no time for deception on either ſide. I know both your hearts. Riſe Thaddeus;" ſaid he to the Count, whilſt he locked both their hands cloſely within his; "take him Mary: receive from your uncle his moſt precious gift; my matchleſs and injured ſon."

The ſhock which the firſt part of this ſpeech occaſioned Miſs Beaufort, would have ſunk her exhauſted ſpirits to inſenſibility, had not the extraordinary aſſertion at its end, arouzed and ſurpriſed her.

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed ſhe, "What do you mean, my dear uncle?"

"Thaddeus

"Thaddeus will explain all to you." returned he, "May heaven bleſs you both! I leave you together; and from him you will be confirmed in the truth of what I ſay."

Mary was too much aſtoniſhed to think of following her uncle out of the room. She ſunk on a ſeat, and turning her eyes full of amazement towards the Count, ſeemed to demand an explanation. Thaddeus, who ſtill retained her paſſive hand, preſſed it warmly to his heart; and whilſt his effulgent eyes were beaming rapture and love, he imparted to her a conciſe but impreſſive narrative of his relationſhip with Sir Robert, and their late arrangement. He touched with ſhort, yet ardent enthuſiaſm, on the virtues of his mother; he acknowledged the unbounded gratitude which belonged to that God who had ſo wonderfully conducted him to find a parent and a home in England; and with renewed pathos of look and manner, ratified the profer which Sir Robert had made of his heart and hand.

Mary had liſtened with uncontroulable emotion to this intereſting detail. Her eyes overflowed: their ingenuous language, enforced by the eloquent blood which glowed on her cheek, did not require the medium of words to declare what ſhe felt. Thaddeus gazed on her with a certainty of bliſs, which penetrated his ſoul till its feelings almoſt amounted to pain. The heart may ache with joy: neither ſighs nor language, could expreſs what paſſed in the Count's; he held her hand to his lips; his other arm fell unconſciouſly round her waiſt; and in a moment he found that he had preſſed her to his breaſt. His heart beat violently. Miſs Beaufort roſe inſtantaneouſly from her chair; but her pure nature needed no diſguiſe; ſhe looked up to him, whilſt her bluſhing eyes were raining down tears of delight; and pronounced in a trembling voice, "Tell my dear uncle, that Mary Beaufort glories in the means by which ſhe becomes his daughter."

She

She moved to the door: Thaddeus, whoſe full tide of tranſport denied him utterance, only claſped her hands again to his lips and boſom; then relinquiſhing them with reluctance, he ſuffered her to quit the room.

CHAP. IX.

Conclusion.

The magnificent eſtabliſhment which this projected union offered to Sobieſki, ſeemed to heal the yet bleeding conſcience of Sir Robert Somerſet. Although he had acquieſced in the Count's generous ſurrender of the family honours, his heart remained ill at eaſe. Every dutiful expreſſion from this long neglected ſon, ſtabbed him with an availing remorſe. Conſcious that his criminal marriage with Pembroke's mother, had deprived the ſon of Thereſe of his juſt inheritance, he could never meet Sobieſki's filial attentions, without experiencing pangs of ſelf-reproach which imbittered all his joy. Miſs Beaufort's avowed and returned affection, at once removed the ſting of this inceſſant recollection: Miſtreſs of immenſe wealth, her hand

hand would put the injured Thaddeus in poſſeſſion, not only of thoſe pure delights dependent alone on mutual ſympathy of ſoul, but again empower his munificent ſpirit to exert itſelf in the diſpoſal of an almoſt princely fortune.

Such meditations having followed the now tranquillized Baronet to his pillow, they brought him into the breakfaſt-parlour next day, full of that calm pleaſure which promiſes a ſteady continuation. The happy family were aſſembled. Mrs. Dorothy ſaluted her brother, whoſe brightened eye declared that he had ſomething pleaſant to communicate; and he did not keep her a moment in ſuſpence. With the firſt diſh of coffee which was poured out, his grateful heart unburthened itſelf of its delightful tidings, that before the preſent month ſhould expire, Miſs Beaufort would give her hand to the Count Sobieſki.

Pembroke was the only hearer who did not expreſs ſurpriſe at this declaration: The tranſported Thaddeus had flown to his bed-ſide the preceding night, and with

a bounding and enraptured heart, had related the whole of the recent ſcenes.

During Sir Robert's animated ſpeech, Mary's bluſhing, yet triumphant eyes, ſought a veil in a branch of geranium which ſhe held in her trembling hand and affected to ſmell.

Mrs. Dorothy immediately roſe from her chair; her heightened colour and glittering eyes ſpoke more than her lips, when ſhe preſſed, firſt her niece, and then the Count Sobieſki, in her venerable arms.

"Heaven bleſs you both!" cried ſhe, "This marriage will be the glory of my age."

Mary turned from the embrace of her aunt, to meet the warm congratulations of Pembroke. Whilſt he kiſſed her burning cheek, he whiſpered loud enough for every one elſe to hear; "And why may I not participate in my good aunt's triumph? Attempt it, dear Mary! If you can perſuade my father to allow me to make myſelf as happy with Lady Albina Stanhope,

Stanhope, as you will render Sobieſki, I ſhall for ever bleſs you !"

Lady Albina coloured like ſcarlet. Sir Robert took her hand with a ſmile of pleaſed ſurpriſe. " Do you, my lovely gueſt ? Do you ſanction, what this bold boy has juſt ſaid ?"

Lady Albina made no anſwer ; but bluſhing deeper than before, caſt a ſide-long glance at Pembroke, as if to petition his ſupport. He was at her ſide in an inſtant ; then ſeriouſly and earneſtly entreating his father's conſent to an union with her ladyſhip ; (whoſe approbation of his paſſion he had obtained the preceding day in the ſhepherd's hut ;) he awaited with hoping anxiety, the ſounds which ſeemed faultering on Sir Robert's lips.

The Baronet, quite overcome by his darling Pembroke having like his brother, diſpoſed of his heart ſo much to his own honour, found himſelf unable to ſay what he wiſhed ; and joining the hands of the two young people in ſilence, he hurried out of the room. He aſcended immediately to the library, where kneeling down, he

returned devout thanks to that all-gracious Being, who had crowned one ſo unworthy, with bleſſings ſo conſpicuous.

Thaddeus, no leſs than his father, remembered the hand, which having guided him through a thorny but ſhort path of ſorrow, had in the end conducted him to an Eden of bliſs: His heart did not forget, even in the midſt of gaiety and ſmiles, the ardent gratitude which was due to the benificent diſpenſer of his happineſs.

Before the lapſe of a week, it was diſcovered, that Sir Robert muſt haſten the marriage of Pembroke with Lady Albina, or be forced by law, to yield her to the demands of her father. After ſome ſearch, Lord Tinemouth had learned that his daughter was under the protection of Sir Robert Somerſet. Inflamed with rage and revenge, he ſent to order her immediate return, under pain of an inſtantaneous appeal to the courts of judicature.

Too well aware that her non-age made her completely obnoxious to this threat, Lady Albina fell into the moſt alarming fits on the firſt communication of the meſſage.

meſſage. Sir Robert urged, that in her circumſtances, no authority could be oppoſed to the Earl's, except that of a huſband's; and on this conſideration, ſhe complied with his arguments and the prayers of her lover, directly to give that power into the hands of Pembroke.

Accordingly next morning by daybreak, accompanied by Mrs. Dorothy and the enraptured Mr. Somerſet, the terrified Lady Albina commenced her journey to Scotland; that being the only place where in her ſituation, the marriage could be legally ſolemnized.

Whilſt theſe young runaways, chaperoned by an old maiden aunt, were purſuing their rapid flight to Gretna Green, Sir Robert ſent his ſteward to London to prepare two houſes near his own in Groſvenor Square, for the reception of his children. During theſe neceſſary arrangements, a happy fortnight elapſed at Deerhurſt. Thrice happy to Mary, becauſe its tranquil hours imparted to her captive heart "*a ſober certainty of that waking*

bliſs," which had ſo often animated the viſions of her imagination. Morning, noon and evening, the companion of the Count Sobieſki, ſhe ſaw with added enthuſiaſm, that the ſublime and princely virtues did not reign alone in his boſom. Their inſufferable brightneſs was rendered leſs intenſe, was beautifully veiled, by the ſoftening ſhades of thoſe gentle amiabilities, which are the ſoothers and ſweeteners of life. His breaſt ſeemed the reſidence of love: of a love, that not only infuſed a warmer exiſtence through her ſoul, but diffuſed ſuch a light of benevolence over every being within its influence, that all appeared happy who caught a beam of his eye; all enchanted, who ſhared the magic of his ſmile. Under what different effects had ſhe ſeen this man! Yet how conſiſtent! At the firſt period of their acquaintance, ſhe beheld him like that glorious orb which her ardent fancy told her he reſembled, ſtruggling with the ſtorm, or looking with ſteady grandeur through the clouds which obſcured his path:

But

But now, like the radiant ſun of ſummer amidſt a ſplendid ſky, he ſeemed to ſtand, the ſource of light, and love, and joy.

Thus did the warm fancy, and warmer heart of Mary Beaufort, paint the image of her lover; and when Sir Robert received intelligence that the Gretna Green party had got to town, and were impatient for the arrival of the dear inhabitants of Deerhurſt, ſhe felt ſome embers of human frailty ſparkle in her boſom, at the anticipation of witneſſing the homage which thoſe who had deſpiſed the unfriended Conſtantine, would pay to the declared and illuſtrious Sobieſki.

The news of Lady Albina's marriage, enraged the Earl of Tinemouth almoſt to madneſs. Well aware, that his withholding her ladyſhip's fortune, would occaſion no uneaſineſs to a family of Sir Robert Somerſet's vaſt poſſeſſions, he gave way to ſtill more vehement burſts of paſſion; and in a fit of impotent threatening, embarked, with all his houſhold, to ſpend the remainder of the ſeaſon on his eſtates in Ireland.

This abrupt departure of the Earl's, caused Lady Albina little uneasiness. His unremitted cruelty, her brother's indifference, and the barbed insults of Lady Sophia Lovel, had wrankled too deep, to leave any filial regret behind. Considering their absence as a suspension of pain, rather than as a punishment, she did not stain the kiss which she imprinted on the venerable cheek of her new parent, with one tear to the memory of her unnatural father.

Whilst all was preparation, splendour, and happiness, in Grosvenor-square, Thaddeus did not forget the excellent Mrs. Robson. He had seen her twice, and had left with her the first payment of an annuity that would render herself and her granddaughter independent for life. Neither did he neglect Mr. Burnett. It was not in his nature to allow any who had served him to pass unrequited. He visited him one day in his rounds; and having repaid him, with a generosity that astonished even the good money-lender; he took his sword, with the other relics of

what

what were once ſo dear, and preſſing them mournfully, yet gratefully, to his breaſt, re-entered Sir Robert's carriage; and was ſet down at his brother's houſe, about an hour before dinner.

Lady Albina Somerſet's arrival in London, had been greeted by the immediate calls of all the people in town, who either had been acquainted with the late Counteſs of Tinemouth, or were known to the Baronet's family. Amongſt the earlieſt names whoſe tickets appeared at her ladyſhip's door, were thoſe of Lord Berrington, Dr. Blackmore, Captain and Mrs. Montreſor, and Dr. Cavendiſh. Lady Albina did not propoſe opening her gates to the gay world, till Miſs Beaufort and the Count were married, and they and ſhe had been preſented at Court; but having heard Pembroke ſpeak of the beforementioned perſons with particular reſpect, (when ſhe took the liſt of her numerous viſitors out of her footman's hand,) ſhe ſelected them as the firſt party which ſhould grace her table.

Thaddeus

Thaddeus had flown to his kind friend Cavendiſh, the very day on which he came to town; and telling him, with a ſmiling countenance, that he was that Sobieſki, about whoſe ſtrange fate he had ſo often expreſſed an intereſt; the aſtoniſhed and delighted doctor embraced him with an ardour, which ſpoke better than language, his admiration and eſteem.

When the Count alighted at Mr. Somerſet's door on the day of his call on the money-lender, he was agreeably ſurpriſed by finding the invited groupe in the ſaloon. Lord Berrington, and the ever lively Maria Egerton, now Mrs. Montreſor, ran up to him at the ſame inſtant, and expreſſed their ſincere joy at not only ſeeing him again, but in a ſituation ſo conſonant to his fame and quality.

Thaddeus replied to their felicitations with a frankneſs and grace peculiarly his own; and was not a little ſurpriſed when Dr. Blackmore, a moment afterwards, recognized him to be the ſtranger who had ſo much engaged his attention about a year

a year ago. The Count had no recollection of this circumſtance, till the good doctor brought the very hour to his remembrance, by mentioning the Hummums, and recapitulating the rudeneſs of the man in black, whoſe name he ſince had learnt was Loftus.

Pembroke could hardly hear the worthy clergyman to an end. He exclaimed againſt his vile tutor's indefatigable villainy; and, turning to Sir Robert, exclaimed, "My dear Sir, the recent hurrying events have hitherto averted juſtice from ſeizing this man; but I muſt beg, that his connexion with any thing belonging to us may end to-morrow. Write to him, and order him to reſign his ſituation at Arun-houſe immediately."

The Baronet promiſed; and Sobieſki trying to change a converſation which agitated his brother, addreſſed Mrs. Montreſor on ſome general topic. Captain Montreſor joined them, and expreſſed great regret at the loſs he ſhould ſhortly ſuſtain in the abſence of his friend Captain Roos.

"How?

"How? Where is he going?" demanded his wife.

Montresor replied, by lamenting the ill state of Lady Sara Roos's health, and the necessity which her husband found to carry her to Italy for its restoration.

"I met him this morning," continued he, "quite in despair about her."

Thaddeus too well divined, that this increased indisposition owed its rise to his return to town; and inwardly petitioning heaven that absence might complete her cure, he could not suppress the sigh which her fatal devotedness to him wrung from his pity and his gratitude.

No one present, except the affectionate Mary, marked the transient melancholy which passed over his countenance. She, who had suspected the unhappy Lady Sara's attachment, loved Thaddeus, if possible, still dearer, for the compassion he bestowed on the victim of a passion, which is as inscrutable as destructive.

When the party descended to dinner, Mrs. Dorothy, who sat next to Thaddeus, rallied him upon the loss which he had sustained

of

of one of his moſt potent admirers. This ſtrange attack, following ſo inſtantly the information relating to Lady Sara Roos, ſummoned a fervid colour into the face of the Count: he looked ſurpriſed, and rather confuſed, at the good old Lady; who ſmiling, related, that ſhe had been told by her milliner this morning, that Miſs Euphemia Dundas had married a Scotch nobleman near Hamilton.

"So much the better for my dear Mary!" cried Pembroke: "Her jealous fears are now at an end: and little Phemy was no contemptible rival. Beſides, Albina," ſaid he, turning gaily to her ladyſhip, "you may congratulate yourſelf on the ſame ſcore. I hear that an old friend of mine is going to take her loving ſiſter off *my* hands. Come, Dr. Cavendiſh, you muſt validate my report, for I learnt it of you."

The good doctor ſmiled, and anſwered in the affirmative; adding, that his friend at Stamford had written to him as news, that

that " the eldeſt ſon of Sir Halerand Shafto, was on the point of marriage with Miſs Dundas, a rich Eaſt Indian heireſs, who was viſiting my lady."

Sobieſki wiſhed them both happy. Lord Berrington proteſted, that his lordſhip was more generous than juſt.

" I vow to heaven," cried the young viſcount " I never knew people the end of whoſe lives ſeemed ſo bent on miſchief. Euphemia, pretty as ſhe is, was better known by her ſpirit of tormenting, than by her beauty: and as for the poor ſquire whom Diana has conjured into matrimony, I have little doubt of his future honours."

" Ah!" cried Mrs. Montreſor, " Poor Acteon! I warrant ſhe will allot him the puniſhment he merits, for ſtepping between her and that delectable Endymion, Fool Laſcelles!"

" A truce, my dear Madam?" entreated Miſs Beaufort.

" She does not deſerve it of you," returned the laughing lady, purſuing the ſubject,

ſubject, till Mrs. Dorothy and Sir Robert Somerſet were both obliged to call very loudly upon charity.

Thaddeus, who knew not the nature of thoſe ſenſations which conſtitute a rejoicing over the probable miſconduct of his enemies, conſidered this part of the converſation, as by far the leaſt pleaſant of the day.

Pembroke's wiſh, with regard to Mr. Loftus, was complied with next morning. Dr. Blackmore having been prevailed upon to take charge of the young Lord Arun, reluctantly bore the mandate for his predeceſſor's diſmiſſion, and ſet out the ſame day for the ſeat of his lordſhip's aunt.

Whilſt Sir Robert Somerſet denounced the guilty, he was careful neither to plunge him into freſh temptations, nor to ſuffer his crimes to injure the innocent. In pity to age and helpleſſneſs, he ſettled two hundred pounds per annum, on the wretched man's mother and ſiſters in Wales. And ſhortly after, in conſequence of Loftus confeſſing that all Pembroke's allegations were but too juſt, Sir Robert

adjudged

adjudged one hundred yearly, to the culprit himſelf, that at leaſt he might not not be ſeduced to obtain by deeper villainy, a ſubſiſtence. As for the living of Somerſet, which had been the price of Mr. Loftus's integrity, that, Sir Robert determined to beſtow on Dr. Blackmore, whenever it ſhould fall.

The appointed day being arrived, in which Mary was to give herſelf and her earthly happineſs, into the power of the only man, whom having once beheld, ſhe ever could have reſigned them to; ſhe pronounced her vows at the altar, with unſteadineſs of tongue, but a fixed heart: and when ſhe alighted at Mr. Somerſet's cottage in Epping Foreſt, ſhe received the congratulations of her dear friends, with a tenderneſs, an elevation of ſoul, which drowned her glowing and enraptured face in tears.

The Count Sobieſki was not leſs ſenſible of the favoured path which Providence had ſpread before him. He had paſſed through hoſts of evils, and he now looked forward to a long Sabbath of peace and gratitude. He found it at the

cottage.

cottage. He enjoyed its full poſſeſſion, when returned to town he ſaw his beautiful wife at the head of faſhion, not only adorning his houſe, but filling his home with all the ineffable comforts of domeſtic life, and domeſtic virtues.

One fine evening in which they were out together, ſhe ordered the carriage to ſtop in Covent Garden; when it drew up, ſhe expreſſed a wiſh to walk through the church-yard. Thaddeus immediately complied; and before he had time to expreſs his ſurpriſe at the ſtrangeneſs of her requeſt, ſhe led him towards the grave of his revered friend Butzou, who had been buried there. It was no longer the ſame; a white marble tablet occupied the place of graſs and yarrow. The Count bent forward, and read with ſwimming eyes, the following inſcription:

Stop, traveller, thou treadeſt upon a hero!
Here
reſts the body
of
Lieutenant GENERAL BUTZOU.

Sobieſki's

Sobieſki's ſoul was pierced. Incapable of ſpeaking, he led his wife back to her carriage; and, placing her in it, claſped her ſuddenly and fondly to his breaſt. His tears guſhed out in ſpite of himſelf, and mingling with hers, poured thoſe thanks, thoſe aſſurances of animated approbation through her heart, as made it even ache with exceſs of happineſs.

Thus mutually endeared, we leave the family of Sir Robert Somerſet. We leave Thaddeus Sobieſki, bleſſed in the fruition of every earthly good. Whilſt he, each morning, opens his eye to freſh proſpects of joy, his pure and manly heart, derives its beſt felicity from gratitude to heaven; and owns, that the retroſpection of paſt misfortunes, like ſhade to a picture, gives to our preſent bliſs greater force and brightneſs.

THE END.

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